the weekly
Standard

MAY 25, 1998 $2.95

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DAVID FRUM

THE BATTLE IS JOINED

FRED BARNES

WILLIAM KRISTOL

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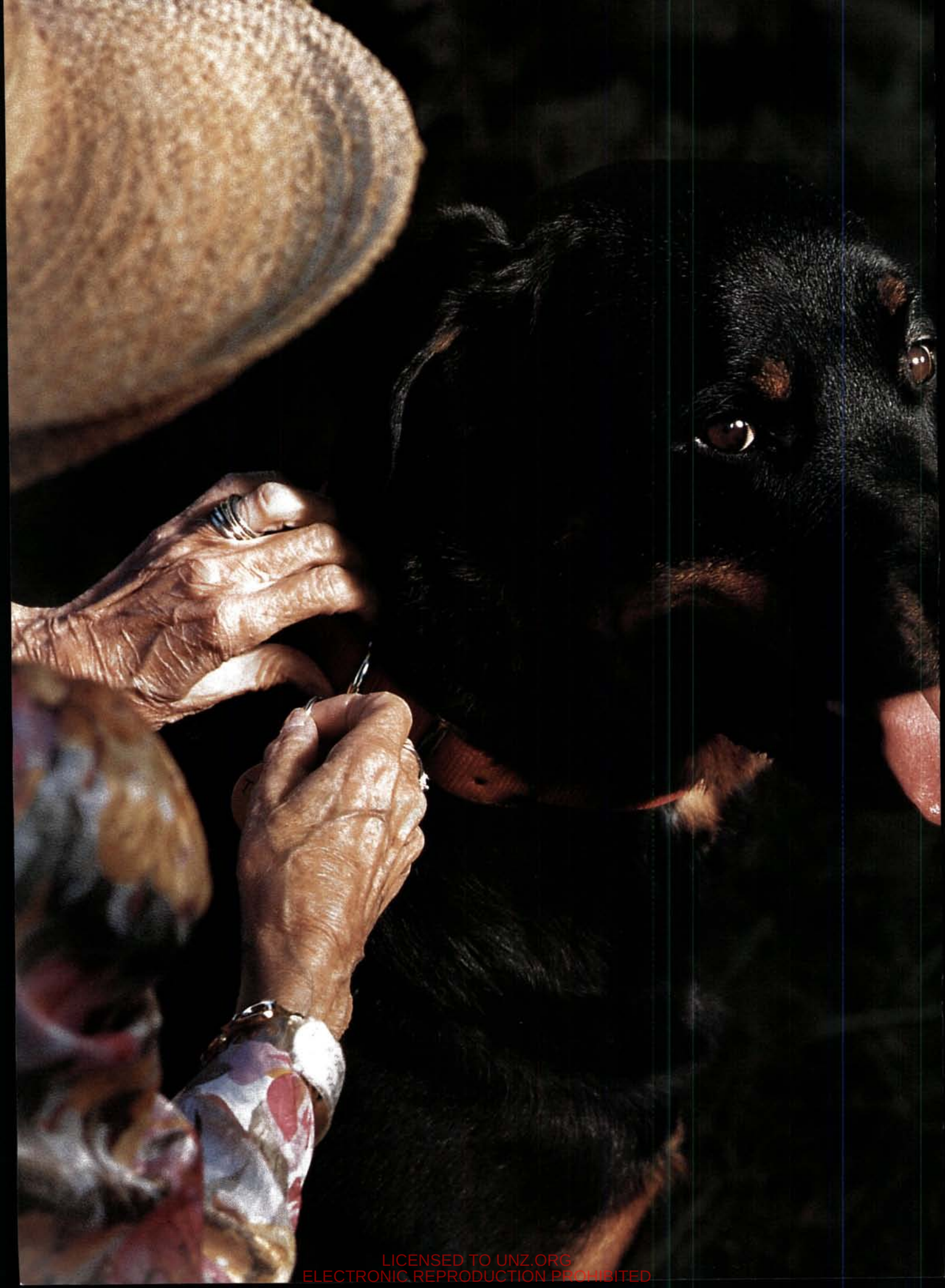

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"Bear could hardly walk. Then, in just a few days, he was his old self again."

SUSAN LLOYD, BEAR'S OWNER
MARLBOROUGH, CONNECTICUT

As a certified therapy dog, Bear has a very important job. Each week, he dispenses good cheer and affection when he visits nursing homes, like the one at Whitney Center in Hamden, Connecticut.

But when he developed arthritis—the same ailment that troubles many of his human friends—his weekly rounds were nearly curtailed.

Luckily for Bear, human disease isn't the only area for which Pfizer searches for cures. Thanks to a treatment made possible by research in veterinary medicine, he was soon up and running again.

And judging from the people who look forward to seeing him, Bear isn't the only one who's feeling better.

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The Future of America's Health Care—

Choice... What Choice?

WHEN ALL YOUR HEALTH CARE CHOICES end in the same place – an HMO – do you really have a choice?

Blue Cross and Blue Shield currently provides its 68 million members a broad range of health plans.

However, we're alarmed that Congress could soon end our ability to provide Blue Cross and Blue Shield members with these choices.

It's an election year and Congress is rushing to regulate private health plans through requirements that reflect the way we do business in our HMO products. But the requirements do not reflect the way we do business in all our products.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield fears that these requirements will make it very difficult, probably impossible, to continue to offer health plans with a large number of physicians to choose from... or health plans that allow our members to go outside our network – for example, PPOs.

These looming congressional proposals are a far-reaching blueprint for just one kind of health plan and one kind of health care choice. HMOs are an excellent choice for many Americans. Over 12 million Blue Cross and Blue Shield members agree. But when Congress creates a world where HMOs are the only health care choice available to every American, it is reasonable to ask – **CHOICE... WHAT CHOICE?**

BlueCross BlueShield Association
An Association of Independent BlueCross and BlueShield Plans

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the weekly Standard

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The Audit Bureau Member

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The Bush-Quayle Split on the Secret Service

By all accounts, Judge Norma Holloway Johnson was not enthusiastic about the arguments put forward by the Clinton administration last week for creating a new "Secret Service privilege"—which would exempt the president's bodyguards from testifying to the Monica Lewinsky grand jury.

One of the exhibits in the administration's case was a letter from former president George Bush taking the administration's side in its argument against independent counsel Kenneth Starr—which deservedly created a huge splash when it was leaked last month.

Attracting less attention was the testimony of Dan Quayle, who argued the opposite side in a letter last week to Attorney General Janet Reno, and who, in The Scrapbook's always stringent view, proves a better lawyer than Bush. Writes Quayle in part:

"Members of the Service are not merely hired personal bodyguards. They are, first and foremost, respected members of the law enforcement community. . . . There are, to be sure, legitimate concerns that agents' testimony be limited so that it is directly related to possible criminal conduct, and not spill over into matters that should be confidential. But those are restrictions and constraints that courts are well equipped to confront in other sensitive cases, and those procedures can easily be applied here.

"As a policy matter, the issue is straightforward. If a federal prosecutor has specific reason to believe that members of the Secret Service can provide evidence tending to prove (or disprove) criminal activity, there is no compelling reason to keep their testimony away from a grand jury. As a former protectee of Secret Service agents, I see no problem with the principle that they—like all federal agents—can be called upon to aid federal criminal investigations. Assisting the quick, effective prosecution of crime is a goal to which all public servants in the executive branch should be dedicated, regardless of who the guilty party may be."

The letter was cc'd to the director of the Secret Service, Ken Starr, and Judge Johnson. Quayle should fax a copy to his old boss, too.

Following in Blair's Footsteps

President Clinton fancies himself the political and policy mentor of British prime minister Tony Blair. Clinton steered the Democratic party to the right. Blair did the same with Labor. Clinton embraced conservative social values (in theory, that is). So did Blair. Clinton . . . well, you know all that.

You can imagine Clinton's wounded vanity, then, when he discovered last year that Blair had one-upped him. Blair proposed that the national government pay for thousands of new teachers to cut down on class size in England. Once Clinton got wind of this, he did the obvious thing. No, he didn't praise Blair, give him credit, and declare he'd like to try the same thing in this country. Clinton summoned his domestic-policy adviser, Bruce Reed, and instructed him to come up with a Clinton proposal for more teachers and smaller classes, as if the idea had originated with the president.

And that's what happened: a Clinton measure to pay, with federal money, for 100,000 new teachers to reduce the student-teacher ratio. The press, the teachers unions, liberals, Hillary—they all went ga-ga over the idea. But, as it turned out, the public could not have cared less. Scarcely an astringent word was heard when the Senate voted down the proposal last month.

A Steep Climb to the Beijing Summit

With President Clinton gearing up for a trip to China next month, Congress is set to highlight the many shortcomings in U.S. policy toward Beijing. Republicans, in particular, have been stirred to action by a series of stories in the *New York Times* alleging that two American companies may have provided illegal assistance to China's ballistic-missile program, and that even after this was known, one of the companies, Loral Space and Communications, was given White House approval to export similar technology to China. Loral's

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chairman happens to have contributed more money to the Democratic National Committee last year than any other single donor. Did this factor into the White House decision? That's the key question to be answered in the coming weeks.

In the House, hearings on the transfer of technology are likely to be held in a number of committees in the weeks ahead, while this week Sen. Thad Cochran's subcommittee on international security and proliferation is scheduled to probe the national-security implications of the administration's liberalization of export controls.

Most significant, the Loral controversy has sparked the interest of House speaker Newt Gingrich and Senate majority leader Trent Lott, neither of whom has a record of expressing skepticism about Clinton policy toward Beijing. On May 8, the two top Republicans sent the president a letter expressing concern about the news reports and asked for greater cooperation with the congressional committees investigating the matter. Lott is sufficiently agitated that he followed up on May 13 with the abrupt announcement that he's rethinking his past support for renewal of China's most-favored-nation trading status.

Congress will have to act before July 2 if it's going to do anything about MFN, but in the meantime Lott has lent his support to an effort by Sen. Tim Hutchinson, an Arkansas Republican, to stiffen the administration's China policy. The effort got off to a good start May 14 when the Senate approved on voice vote a bill to help prevent Chinese goods made with slave labor from entering the United States, along with a bill requiring cabinet agencies to publish a list of companies owned by the Chinese military that operate on American soil.

Hutchinson wants the Senate to pass the rest of the legislation approved by the House last November, which includes a bill expanding Radio Free Asia broadcasts in China and another bill that would block Chinese officials guilty of religious discrimination from entering this country. Hutchinson says if these bills aren't passed out of committee, he's prepared to attach them as amendments to every piece of legislation that comes to the Senate floor.

All in all, it should be an interesting walk-up to the president's late-June summit in Beijing.

Teach Your Children Well

Potential good news for Clinton-bashers from the latest Zogby poll on presidential greatness: The public's rating of perhaps the greatest White House Lothario ever is finally on the way down. Bad news for Clinton-bashers: The Scrapbook refers not to the sitting president but to JFK, who has slipped in the latest rankings from second to third, following FDR and Truman.

So a mere three and a half decades after JFK's frolics in the White House pool with Fiddle and Faddle, those pesky approval ratings seem to have begun their slide—assisted in large part, the pollsters speculate, by the recent publication of Seymour Hersh's *The Dark Side of Camelot*. The kicker: Most of those whose opinion sank were "people too young to remember the Kennedy years."

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Casual

Brooklyn Revisited

I once watched my gentle, white-haired grandmother browse through *Last Exit to Brooklyn,* the avidly obscene novel of life in the projects ca. 1960. When she had finished, Grandma put down the book and said with great dignity, "Well, when I was growing up there, Brooklyn was a very refined place."

Now I have come across some evidence confirming that. On Grandma's fourteenth birthday—December 25, 1901—an aunt gave her an autograph book, which I've been looking through. Some three dozen of her school friends and cousins and assorted adults signed it, most of them adding an uplifting proverb or stock rhyme.

It is a pleasingly substantial object—diamond-shaped and ornate in the Victorian manner. The hard, shiny cover shows a neoclassical nymph in a one-shouldered dress, holding an urn as if to pour. The back cover is parti-colored green velvet, threadbare now. The contents are from another world.

The pervasive theme is friendship (*To Anna: In the golden chain of Friendship, Regard me as a link. Lester Frank, Dec. 30, 1901*). The tone is earnest, reverent, straight, with flashes of humor but a disconcerting near-total absence of irony. The wishes expressed here are for health and the prizes of the spirit.

Here's as materialistic as the sentiments get: *A little health, a little wealth, / A little house and freedom, / A few good friends for certain ends, / And little use to need them.*

Here's as saucy: *Remember me and my good wishes / When you and he are washing dishes. Yours truly, Happy Gohooligan (Hazel W. Gruner) July 19, 1904.*

Here's as irreverent: *You asked for something original. / Where shall I begin? / There's nothing original in me / Except original sin.*

More typical is the serious message Grandma's mother wrote to her only child on the day she turned fourteen: *Remember the will to do rightly, / If used will the evil confound; / Live daily by conscience, that nightly / Your sleep may be peaceful and sound. / In contest of right never waver, / Let thy honesty shape every plan, / And life will of paradise savor / If you do as near right as you can.*

Even beyond the moralism, what seems furthest of all from the mental universe of the young teenagers I know is the sense of life as grave and potentially fraught with sorrow—and the intimations of mortality. The first entry, written in flawless copperplate by Grandma's best friend, Bella Beck, is poignant: *Ah! May your life, dear Anna, be / A dream from care and sorrow free; / May every joy that love can yield / Be to your gentle heart revealed; / May faith, and hope, and wisdom lead, / While o'er life's trackless tide you speed, / Until the voyage of life is done, / And you eternal bliss have won.*

Even in old age, Grandma kept Bella's picture on her dressing table, loyal though the friendship was brief. Bella was buried in what would have been her wedding dress. She died of consumption at 19.

In some obvious ways, life was more precarious in those days than it is, say, for my Leonardo DiCaprio-smitten fourteen-year-old niece (another Anna). Back then, the necessity of steeling the young for adversity and girding them with realism about moral danger was generally agreed (*Love many, trust few, always paddle your own canoe).* I suspect the practice helped make Grandma strong.

After finishing high school, she became a librarian and worked at the Brooklyn Public Library for seven years. And she taught Sunday school in Chinatown. She always wanted to be a nurse, but her parents thought that wasn't genteel.

Then after seven years' deference to their wishes, she won their consent and registered at the Harlem School of Nursing. Eventually, she worked both as an independent nurse and on hospital staffs, attending births and deaths and all the dramas in between.

In the shadows of life you may need an umbrella. / May yours be upheld by a handsome young fellow. Grandma was in her thirties before she traded the secret dream of being a medical missionary in China for domesticity. With husband and children and a house in Bayside, her life assumed a conventional pattern. Always, though, a coherent worldview remained her anchor on the trackless tide—a religious worldview formed in her childhood, acknowledged by all the people she knew and reflected in these sing-song verses, so foreign now.

Claudia Winkler

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At last count, the world didn't have any continents to spare.

The hard fact is that if high-yield farming techniques had never been developed, the world would need more farmland to feed its current population. And not just a little more, either.

We would have had to plow under the equivalent of Brazil.

And the United States.

And every single one of the 46 countries in Europe.

Of course, that would have meant destroying millions of acres of woodlands and other wildlife habitat—not to mention the wildlife itself.

Fortunately, thanks to high-yield farming, the world is quite capable of feeding a peak population of nearly ten billion people—on existing farmland. That's good news for everyone, because in a world of so many diverse species, there's just no land to spare.

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Correspondence

The Disappearing Diaspora

Charles Krauthammer's article on Israel at 50 was superb, and his argument that the survival of Israel is a precondition for the survival of Jewry in the Diaspora is entirely persuasive ("At Last, Zion," May 11). As he notes, Israel will soon be the population center of world Jewry and will, I believe, be sending aid to (not receiving it from) Jews in the Diaspora.

I would add, however, that Israel's survival is a necessary but not a sufficient condition. The fact of Israel's existence alone will not guarantee the future of the Diaspora communities. Faced, as Krauthammer explains, with demographic challenges they are not meeting, those communities must refocus themselves to Judaism if they are to avoid huge population declines. Synagogues and day schools must replace, at the heart of Jewish life, community-service agencies, defense organizations, and plain politics.

Of course, this may lead to a bizarre combination. Krauthammer rightly tells us that the survival of synagogues in Brooklyn, Skokie, Marseille, or Moscow depends on the future of Israel. However, a large part of the population in these places seems to scorn traditional Judaism. Can it be that the heart and soul of Jewish life will be Israel, but that most of the people practicing Judaism will live in the United States, France, or even Russia?

What if the surviving Diaspora communities become increasingly religious (partly because the less religious people assimilate and disappear over the generations), but Jews in Israel become more secular? It's enough to make a Zionist's head spin.

ELLIOT ABRAMS
WASHINGTON, DC

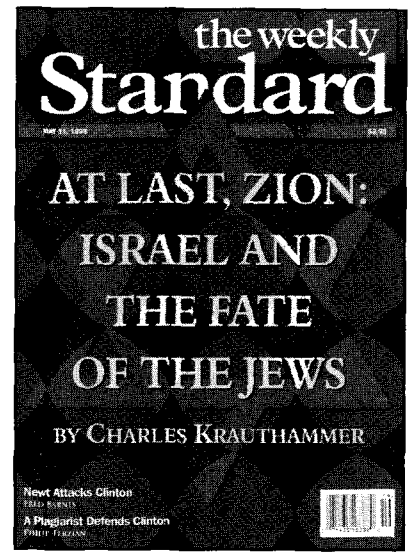
Charles Krauthammer's fears for the destruction and disappearance of the Jews is unfounded. Krauthammer speaks of the *miracle* of the creation and survival of the Jewish state. Is he unwilling to believe in yet another miracle, the promise to Abraham that "all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed *forever*?"

This promise is echoed, re-echoed, and explicated by the prophets from Moses to Isaiah to Ezekiel, who speak of Israel's resurrection as a state (i.e., the valley of the dry bones prophesy, Ezek. 37) and of its salvation from the enemies Krauthammer identifies in his essay.

A time of blessing is promised, not only for Israel, but for all men—when swords will be beaten into ploughshares and when 10 men shall take hold of the skirt of him who is a Jew and say: We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.

God will not forget His people.

LEROY T. CANOLES JR.
NORFOLK, VA



Under No Terms

Election years always seem to convert "back-burner" concerns into issues of importance. Congressional term limits is a proposal that, if successful, will certainly weaken Congress and ultimately our nation.

Fred Barnes correctly points out ("A New Tack for Term Limits," May 4) that Americans for Term Limits is putting tremendous pressure on congressional candidates to sign a promise that, if elected, they will serve for only 12 years. If the candidate refuses, however, he is smeared by this organization with "attack advertisements" in the media.

Thankfully, Americans for Term Limits is correct in stating that Congress will never pass a constitutional amendment restricting members' duration of service. To do so would run counter to the intent of the founding fathers, especially as regards the Senate. In both the House and the Senate, committee chairs are awarded by seniority, competence, and experience. If senators are limited to two six-year terms, the political influence of a senator from a less populous state, such as Rhode Island or Wyoming, will be severely curtailed.

If seniority were not the prime consideration, all of the committee chairs would go to representatives from the more densely populated states, such as California and New York. Political power would then shift to those states with more electoral votes and more congressmen. The seniority system levels the playing field.

In addition, restricting the number of consecutive years a member of Congress may serve also limits our freedom to vote for the person we want. The lie that advocates of term limits are spreading is that, once a person is elected to an office, he usually remains there ad infinitum. However, as ex-speaker of the House Tom Foley and many of his Democratic colleagues will attest, when the electorate decides to make a change, no constitutional amendment is necessary.

ROBERT L. WICHTERMAN
LANCASTER, PA

Going the Way of the Whigs

Precisely what does David Brooks mean when he calls new Republican poster-girl Lisa Graham Keegan "moderately pro-choice" ("Lisa Graham Keegan, Too Good for the GOP?," April 27). How little killing of the innocent does she favor?

If yet another pro-abortion pol is raised to stardom in the GOP, then the standard prophesy that the party is going the way of the Whigs comes that much closer to fulfillment. Without principles and without heeding the men and women Brooks dismisses as "guardians of Conservative Correctness," the Republican party will remain stuck in the stagnation that Brooks rightly attributes to a lack of a governing philosophy.

PATRICK G.D. RILEY
WAUWATOSA, WI

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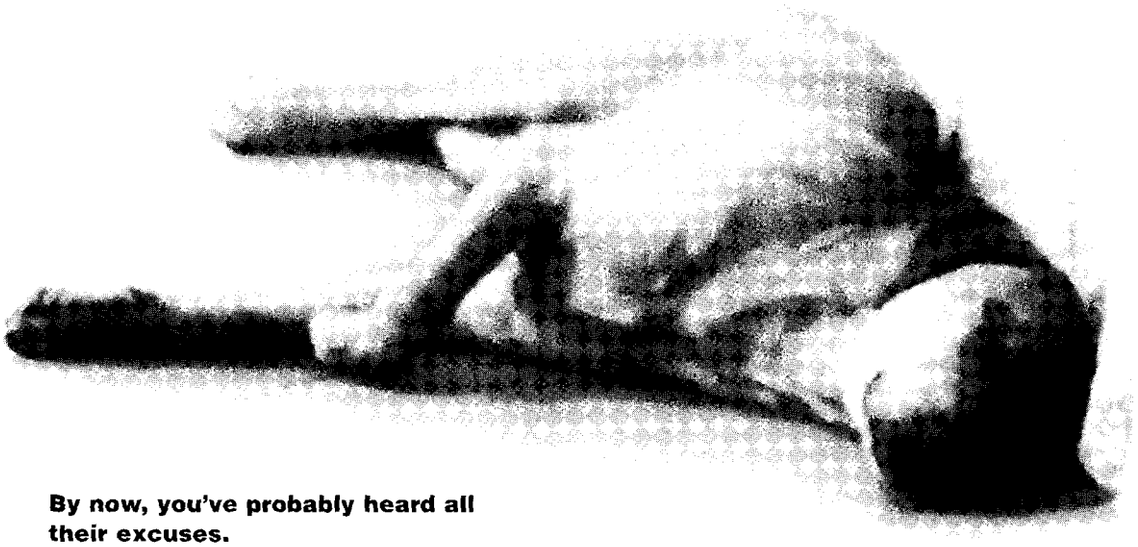
How Long Will These Sleeping Dogs Lie?



By now, you've probably heard all their excuses.

The Big Dogs, AT&T and MCI, are still howling that they can't compete in local telephone markets. It's just too difficult. It requires too much effort.

Just because they don't want to compete, doesn't mean there isn't competition.

Recently, the Federal Communications Commission held hearings in which smaller, local competitors described their success in competing against the Bell companies.

These smaller companies don't have the tens of thousands of employees that the big long distance giants do. They don't have billions of investment dollars. But they are competing.

While the big dogs are sleeping, Regional Bells *are working* to make competition work.

How? Local phone companies have devoted more than $4 billion and assigned over 8,000 employees to make sure competition works. They've built customized network elements; offered on-site network training and customer service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All to connect MCI, AT&T and other competitors to local markets.

You know those big dogs. They lie around all day.

MCI and AT&T have given up on local residential service. Why? The markets are open. Smaller companies are competing. Competition is here.

MCI and AT&T are stalling competition. They only want competition on their own terms. On their own timetable. That's what their executives conceded during recent merger discussions.

Wake up big dogs. And stop all that lying around.

We'll connect all Americans if we're allowed to compete.

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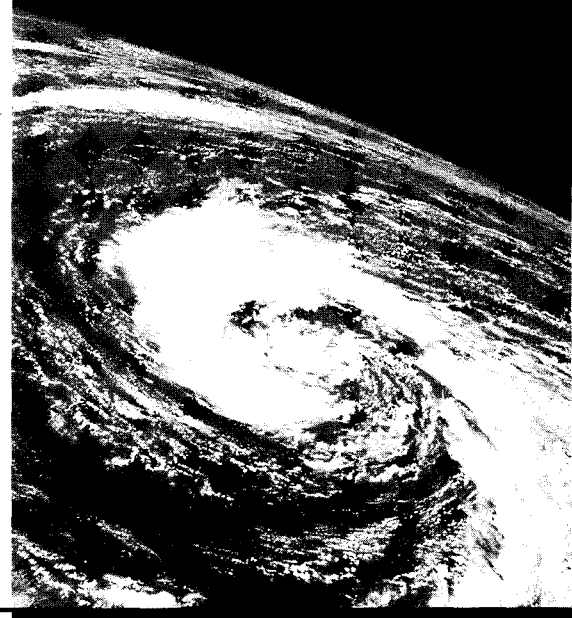
QUESTION:

WHAT DO WE ALL AGREE ON?



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We believe we must address one of the major challenges of the 21st Century: responding to global climate change while maintaining economic growth. We are working together through the Pew Center on Global Climate Change, as members of its Business Environmental Leadership Council to educate the public in the U.S. and abroad, conduct studies and policy analyses and increase international understanding.

We begin this effort united in several beliefs:

First, we accept the views of most scientists that enough is known about the science and environmental impacts of climate change for us to take actions to address its consequences.

ANSWER:

TAKING ON THE CHALLENGE OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE.

PEW CENTER ON Global CLIMATE CHANGE

Second, businesses can and should take concrete steps now in the U.S. and abroad to assess their opportunities for emission reductions, establish and meet their emission reduction objectives, and invest in new, more efficient products, practices and technologies.

Third, the Kyoto agreement represents a first step in the international process, but more must be done both to implement the market-based mechanisms that were adopted in principle in Kyoto and to more fully involve the rest of the world in the solution.

Fourth, we can make significant progress in addressing climate change and sustaining economic growth in the United States by adopting reasonable policies, programs and transition strategies.

Preventing climate change is serious business...for all of us.

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.PEWCLIMATE.ORG

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the weekly Standard

Clinton's Feckless Foreign Policy

You might say it was a bad week for Bill Clinton's foreign policy. India detonated five nuclear weapons—a direct consequence, according to Indian officials, of Clinton's appeasement of China and of his administration's inability to prevent China's sales of weapons and missile technology to Pakistan. Then there was the administration's ill-conceived and bungled attempt to strong-arm Israel into making more territorial concessions to Yasser Arafat. That brilliant idea, the brainchild of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and her top Middle East adviser, Martin Indyk, blew up in the administration's face, forcing Albright to retract the ultimatum to Israel that she had so foolishly issued the week before.

At the same time, in Kosovo, where the next Balkan war seems about to erupt, Albright's vague and empty threats over the past month have had their predictable effect: Serbia's top thug, Slobodan Milosevic, last week stepped up his violent repression of the ethnic Albanian majority, driving more and more Albanians to take up arms. In Indonesia, meanwhile, where Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin has been fecklessly trying to maintain "stability" by giving millions of dollars to prop up the Suharto dictatorship, riot police shot and killed six anti-Suharto protesters in what is shaping up to be a national bloodbath. In the face of that mounting crisis, the administration is quite visibly paralyzed. Albright's call last week for "political reform" comes about four months too late.

And that's just last week's headlines. Buried inside the newspapers was word of the even more ominous collapse of U.S. policy in Iraq. On May 8, the *Washington Times* quoted senior officials of the U.N. inspections team as declaring, "We're dead and [the Iraqis] know it." The weapons inspectors charged that the Clinton administration has given up on finding Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction and is in fact in the process of giving up on the U.N. inspections regime. They're right. Despite the U.N. inspectors' insistence that "no progress" has been made in uncovering Saddam's biological and chemical weapons programs, President Clinton publicly announced he was "encouraged." According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the administration has already agreed on a strategy of retreat from the Persian Gulf. A travel ban imposed on Iraqi officials last year, but never enforced, has been lifted by the U.N. Security Council. The next step will be the lifting of all sanctions on Saddam's regime later this year. Meanwhile, President Clinton has ordered a drastic cut in U.S. forces in the Gulf. As one U.N. inspector told the *Times*, Clinton officials "have lost interest"; the inspections regime "is imploding and everybody knows it."

U.S. GLOBAL LEADERSHIP IS COLLAPSING. WITH IT MAY GO THE DEMOCRATIC WORLD ORDER CLINTON'S PREDECESSORS WORKED SO HARD TO ESTABLISH.

That's a lot of bad news for one week, but merely to list these foreign-policy debacles is to miss the more significant, and the more frightening, reality: Six years into Clinton's presidency, U.S. global leadership is collapsing. With it may go the peaceful, democratic, and prosperous international order Clinton's predecessors worked so hard to establish.

So far, the press, the Congress, and even the Clinton administration itself have been treating the various calamities around the world as discrete crises. In fact, they're all related. Take Kosovo. It's now clear that the administration's backing off from effective military action against Saddam Hussein earlier this year encouraged Milosevic to believe that he could clamp down on the Albanian population without fear of U.S. military response. And the administration's timid "multilateralism" throughout the Iraq crisis, when both Russia and France were allowed to thwart U.S. efforts against Saddam, played out again when

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Russia and U.S. allies repeatedly balked at imposing harsher sanctions against Serbia at critical moments in the unfolding crisis. Now it seems that France and Russia are prepared to gang up on the United States to argue against effective action just about anywhere—and the Clinton administration will yield.

Or take India's nuclear tests last week. It may be a coincidence that India's decision came just a few days after the Clinton administration announced its new "strategic partnership" with China. But the Indians know that "strategic partnership" has meant American winking at China's assistance to Pakistan's nuclear weapons and missile programs. Just as important, the Indians know that "strategic partnership" turns out to mean in practice the frightening specter of an increasingly aggressive China unchecked by U.S. power. Indeed, on May 3 the Indian defense minister in a television interview cited China's nuclear weapons stockpiled along India's borders and said, "China is potential threat number one." Without reliable U.S. leadership to provide security in Asia, the Indians have unfortunately—but not surprisingly—chosen to see to their own defense.

And they may have thought they could get away with it at little or no cost. After all, for four years the Clinton administration has been unwilling to sanction China for its sales of weapons and technology to Pakistan and Iran. The Indian government may well have decided that Clinton's devotion to the interests of American big business would eventually trump his alleged concern about the proliferation of nuclear weapons and medium-range ballistic missiles.

And the administration's stupid confrontation with Israel last week can be traced back to its defeat in Iraq a couple of months ago. Recall that in the weeks before the administration's capitulation to Saddam—codified in the February 23 agreement between Kofi Annan and the Iraqi government—Secretary Albright made a tour of the Middle East trying to drum up support for U.S. policy. What she got instead was a tongue-lashing by Arab leaders about Israel's alleged "intransigence" in the peace process. In truth, most of the Arab states were reluctant to support the Clinton administration in what looked likely to be only a futile pin-prick bombing raid against Iraq. But Albright and other U.S. officials preferred to lay the blame for their failure on Netanyahu. Thus emerged over subsequent weeks the ultimatum strategy, which has now put U.S.-

Michael Ramirez

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Israeli relations in crisis. But this is what you get from an administration too timid to exert real international leadership: It's always easier to let down your friends than to fight your enemies.

It's hard to think of a time when America's international standing was so low, when Washington's credibility was in such disrepair, when an American president and his top advisers seemed so adrift in a sea of international troubles. Hard, but not impossible. From where we sit, the present moment looks a lot like the late 1970s. Obviously, there's no Soviet Union; but the post-Cold War world has its own set of risks, and our weakness is in certain ways as dangerous today as our weakness was in the late 1970s. Bill Clinton's foreign policy has become the post-Cold War equivalent of Jimmy Carter's.

It's also worth noting that Clinton-administration defense spending has continued down; it's now at the lowest percentage of GDP since Pearl Harbor. Declining military strength has accelerated the erosion of U.S. leadership around the world.

Congress, of course, has acquiesced in this decline. The Republican budgets introduced in both House and Senate this year propose the same level of defense spending as Clinton. And in foreign policy more generally, Republican handwringing over Bosnia and other foreign involvements has diverted the party from the necessary serious critique of U.S. weakness and timidity.

Now is the time for members of Congress of both parties, and all aspiring presidential candidates, to step up to the plate. Where are the new "Scoop" Jacksons and John Towers? And, above all, who will be this era's Ronald Reagan? ♦

O.J. Simpson on Clinton

by Matt Labash

Consider O.J. Simpson and Bill Clinton. Save a homicide or two, they're not entirely different. Both cheat on the links and on their wives (Simpson's being former and late). Both do their best acting under penalty of perjury. Both compel us, under a crush of evidence, to presume their guilt even as they insist on their innocence.

Now consider O.J. Simpson *on* Bill Clinton. Not physically, God help us—but as an informed commentator. Most of Simpson's recent interrogators (Greta Van Susteren, *Esquire*, the BBC) continue talking to O.J. about gloves and prosecutors and decapitations, without calculating that he is a man of reflection, a man of the world, a man with enough leisure time to fritter away his days in front of *Hardball with Chris Matthews* (one of his favorites).

NEVER STICKLERS FOR THE RULES, BOTH MEN TOOK A FEW MULLIGANS. SIMPSON WAS IMPRESSED BY "HOW SINCERE HE WAS TALKING ABOUT HIS WIFE."

Recently, I learned O.J.'s life is more than just golf dates, rounds of clubhouse gin rummy, and the search for the "real killer." On a lark, I had been faxing Simpson, in hopes of soliciting a cameo quote for an unrelated story. Last week, when his daily golf game was rained out, he called me (collect) and chatted for an hour-and-a-half, as he loitered in the repose of perennial unemployment. "The incident"—as he calls the stabbing murder of his wife Nicole and Ron Goldman—has been bad for business. But what hasn't suffered, four years after the murders, is his golf handicap. "Pre-Nicole, I was probably playing mostly around a 10, 11, 12," he says. "Now, I'm about a 7, 8. Once again, I don't have all those other distractions, you know."

It was at San Diego's Del Mar Country Club, in 1994, that O.J. got to know Bill Clinton. An independent Perot-voter in 1992, Simpson joined Clinton there for a golf outing. The president was escaping the North Korean nuclear showdown. Two months later, O.J. would be escaping in a Bronco down the Santa Monica freeway. Never sticklers for rules, the two men both took a few mulligans, says O.J.—using the golfers' slang for cheating—then drained a few beers. But back in the clubhouse, Clinton wooed a new voter. "I was just touched . . . how sincere he was talking about his wife," says Simpson. About the onset of the Whitewater investigation, "He said, 'I can take it, but here's a woman who only tried to help people her whole life, and they're really coming after [her].' . . . I was struck by the sincerity. . . . I think I'm a pretty good judge."

Besides Clinton's sincerity, O.J. says he was impressed that the president conducted himself like a regular guy. "On the golf course," Simpson allows, "there was some irreverent humor about various

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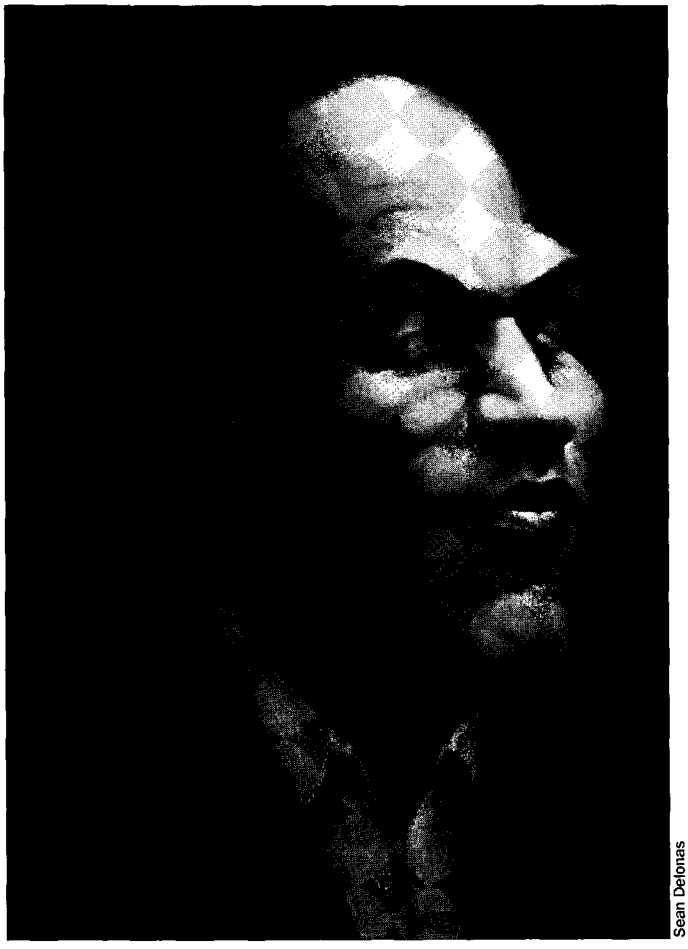
things." I ask him to specify. Was it like the blue golf-course patter that Vernon Jordan memorialized earlier this year with his delicate disclosure, "We talk p—sy"? But Simpson has apparently taken the Susan McDougal course in *omertà*: "I'm not going to talk about it. It was private. Don't even try. I refuse to discuss it."

With O.J. foursquare in the Clinton camp, Democratic party hacks may want to start targeting the Simpson-supporter demographic, which, like Spice Girls fans and intravenous drug users, is an under-reported constituency. Following the example of many Clinton loyalists, Simpson says he is not that interested in the president's recent travails. On Paula Jones, O.J. takes a Carvillean tack: "If it's true what happened to Paula Jones, simply for hitting on a dog like her, he should do 30 days. Other than that, I don't think it's anybody's business."



Sean Delonas

Concerning the Starr investigation, O.J. proves himself a perfect student of Lanny Davis: He derides spending "another 30 to 50 million dollars on who may have given Clinton h—. To me that's a shame." The investigation, that is, not that Clinton was given . . . what O.J. said. While he doesn't pretend to know the state of play between Clinton and Lewinsky, Simpson does know a thing or two about the overpowering affection of young lovelies (in his post-"incident" phase, O.J. says he is deluged with nude photos and women's underwear). "I don't care what they tell you," O.J. says. "A 22, 23-year-old girl who has her mind set on a 50-year-old guy is more in control than the 50-year-old guy. . . . When their minds are set on something, more than not, they're going to get what they want."

One gets the sense that it would not matter terribly to O.J. if Clinton were guilty of these alleged indiscretions. For one of the attributes O.J. prizes most—even more than sincerity—is loyalty: "I had a friend in the past who'd sort of done something, not his wife—but who, in a street thing, killed a person. I'm a Christian, and to me, 'Thou shalt not kill' is the first commandment' [N.B.: To most Christians, it's the fifth]. But I still supported the guy as best I could."

As for his own case, not much has changed when I grill him on specifics. The blood evidence was still cooked by the LAPD. He allows that "I could've owned" the famed Aris Isotoner gloves, but he also sees "tons of people" with the same gloves. In any case, they still don't fit. Those 30-plus photographs of O.J. in Bruno Magli shoes that match the bloody footprint? They were doctored. And with the "real" killer still at large, is O.J. still fulfilling his vow to continue the investigation into the murders? Sort of.

I called his private investigator, Patrick McKenna, who unearthed the audio of Mark Fuhrman's racist rants. He now works pro bono for Simpson (who still draws a $25,000-per-month pension), and O.J. is getting what he pays for. "It's not like I get up in the morning, get out a magnifying glass, hop in my car, and start snooping around," says McKenna. Mostly, he fields faxes and letters from tipsters, the majority of whom are "kooks" or "just friendly people who say, 'Did you see Geraldo last night?'"

Since McKenna's not optimistic that any of these clues will turn up the real killer, I ask O.J. why he's not actually paying for the investigation he promised. He would, he says, but—and now it's the Al Gore parallel that is eerie—what with all the private-school tuition he's paying for the kids, it's just more than he can afford.

Matt Labash is a reporter for THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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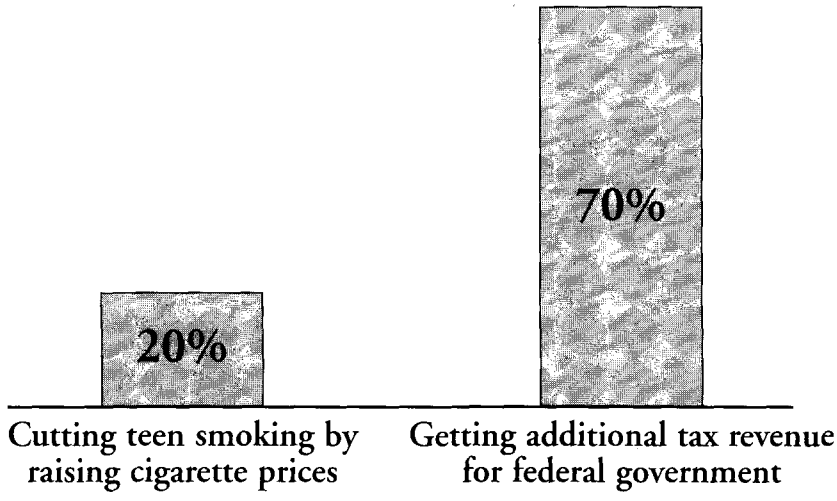

Source: *Wall Street Journal* / NBC News Poll by Hart-Teeter, as reported in the *Wall Street Journal*, April 23, 1998.

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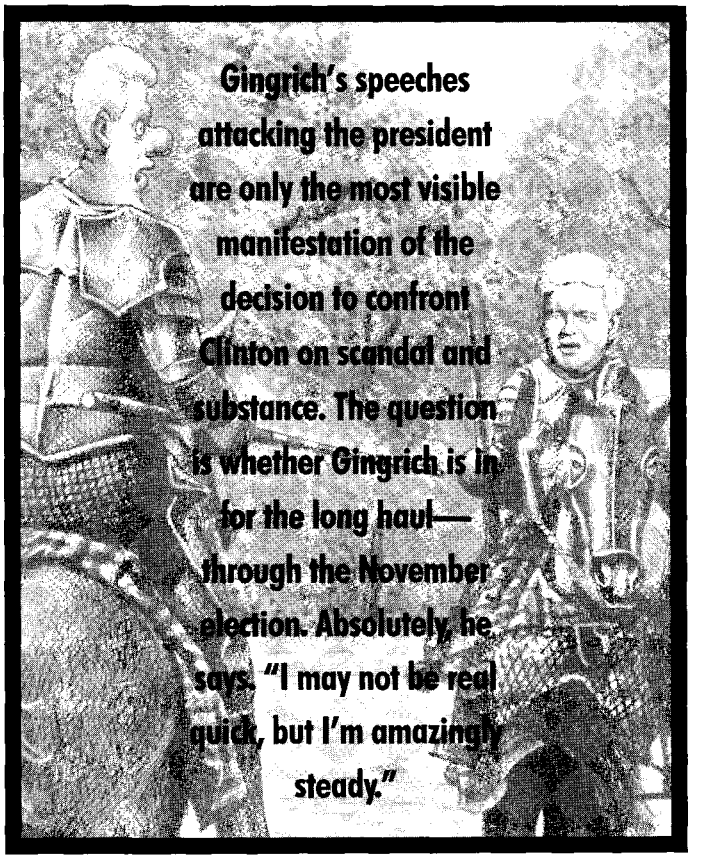
THE BATTLE IS JOINED

by Fred Barnes

IT'S OFFICIAL: THE ERA OF GOOD FEELING and fruitful dealings between congressional Republicans and President Clinton is over. So says House speaker Newt Gingrich. That era began with the passage of welfare reform and a minimum-wage hike in 1996 and continued through the balanced-budget agreement of 1997. It ended this spring, amid the Clinton sex scandal, when the White House accelerated its stonewalling of investigators and its efforts to blow up congressional probes, according to Gingrich. His speeches attacking the president are only the most visible manifestation of the decision to confront Clinton on scandal and substance. Last week, a GOP leader shopped around for a sponsor of a House resolution demanding Clinton make public "all records or documents relating to any claims of executive privilege." The resolution was designed to get the issue of Clinton's wrongdoing and stonewalling out of various committees and onto the House floor (and on TV). The person behind the resolution? Gingrich.



The question now is whether Gingrich is in for the long haul—through the November election. Absolutely, Gingrich says. "I may not be real quick, but I'm amazingly steady." One line in his April 27 speech to the political action committee GOPAC that inaugurated the new anti-Clinton phase may reinforce Gingrich's determination. "I will never again as long as I am speaker make a speech without commenting on" the president's drive to undermine independent counsel Ken Starr and thwart any investigations of Clinton scandals, he declared. And he's largely kept to that pledge. (He'll skip zinging Clinton, however, in commencement addresses in June at Georgia Tech, the University of California at San Diego, and Ohio University.) Three days after the GOPAC speech, Gingrich urged Republicans to "go to the country" and "stake everything" on their case against Clinton, particularly on two principles. One is that Clinton isn't above the law, the other that the public has a right to know about presidential wrongdoing.

By mid-May, Gingrich had added a third principle to be used against Clinton. It involves Clinton's obligations as the nation's chief law-enforcement officer. By refusing to cooperate with Starr, the president flouts rather than enforces the law, Gingrich insists. Stonewalling is the antithesis of law enforcement.

Meanwhile, Gingrich is promoting a swarm of policy issues. His plan is for Republicans to "redefine the contrast" with Clinton. He now talks up conservative issues that have one thing in common: There's not a chance Clinton will go along with them. Gingrich wants to slash the capital gains tax rate to 15 percent and make sure there's "no net tax increase" this year even while the tax on cigarettes is jacked up. He's eager to eliminate the "marriage penalty" and provide full deductibility for individual health-insurance expenses. He's signed on to Rep. John Kasich's budget, which cuts an additional $100 billion in spending. And he's begun thinking about slogans: Big-government greed vs. your pocketbook; Get the surplus out of Washington or they'll spend it; Vote Democratic—so we can cover it all up.

The emphasis on substance is partly a response to Republican queasiness about the speaker's attacks on Clinton, especially his assertion that actual crimes and not just a scandal are at the heart of White House wrongdoing. At a May 14 strategy meeting, Gingrich agreed to ratchet the crime talk down a notch and play

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up policy matters more. Some senior GOP House members suggested Gingrich soften his language, be more circumspect, and make more frequent use of the word "alleged." Again, he's done that. An example is this way of characterizing Clinton's actions: "We have no proof today that the president has violated the law. We do have proof the president is not cooperating with enforcement of the law." In demanding accountability from Clinton, "the trick is to be calm, steady, and stick to the fundamentals," Gingrich says.

What's striking about the get-aggressive strategy is that most Republicans on Capitol Hill believe Gingrich is basically doing the right thing. Henry Hyde, Bill Archer, Bob Livingston, Tom DeLay, Dick Armey, John Linder—they haven't complained. And their assent wasn't a foregone conclusion. As speaker, Gingrich is a loner. He has no inner circle of House members he relies on for advice. His most influential adviser is aide Joseph Gaylord. Gingrich didn't consult other members before launching his campaign against Clinton. Yet he now appears to be getting along with them better than he has in months.

If nothing else, they're delighted that Gingrich has thrilled the Republican base. Still, some of Gingrich's old friends aren't sure he'll succeed in putting Clinton on the defensive and forcing the public to take the charges against him seriously. Gingrich concedes his judgment of Clinton represents, for now, a minority view. "I'm not worried about it," he says. His press secretary, Christina Martin, says the speaker "expects the environment to warm to the message." When? "I don't know when critical mass occurs," Gingrich says. But Clinton and his apologists have a tougher problem. "They either pro-actively clear their name or there's a presumption of guilt," says Gingrich.

There's one other presumption going around—that Gingrich is running for president in 2000 and his attacks on Clinton will help his candidacy. Naturally, Gingrich says he hasn't decided, and perhaps he hasn't. But his tough stance against Clinton appeals to the quarter of the Republican electorate that's most likely to vote in presidential primaries, the hard-core conservatives. I suspect this has occurred to Gingrich. And I'm sure it's occurred to Gaylord, the person in Gingrich's orbit most resolute in pressing for a presidential bid. Whatever Gingrich decides, he's quickly putting himself in a position to run. If Clinton repels the Gingrich onslaught, the speaker will still get credit for trying. But if the public actually turns against Clinton, Gingrich will bask in the glow of triumph. And run.

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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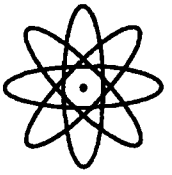

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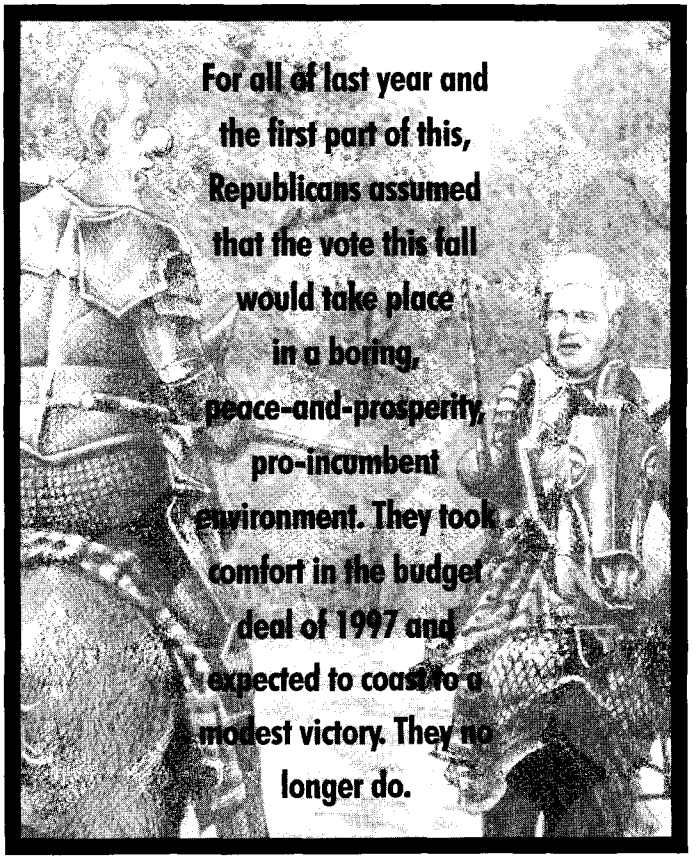
Clinton Is the Issue

by William Kristol

At the core of late-20th-century liberalism are two impulses: ratcheting government up, and defining deviancy down. The American people dealt the first of these impulses a decisive blow in the 1994 congressional election. They will have a chance to confront the second this coming November. For if 1994 was a referendum on Hillary Clinton's health-care plan as the embodiment of big government, 1998 will be a referendum on Bill Clinton's behavior as the embodiment of political cynicism and the abuse of office.

The 1998 election was not supposed to be about this, or about anything else in particular. For all of last year, and the first part of this, Republicans assumed that the vote would take place in a boring, peace-and-prosperity, pro-incumbent environment. Republicans had confidence in the historical pattern showing that the president's party does badly in the sixth year of a presidency. They were committed to avoiding confrontation with the wily Clinton, who had burned them before. They took comfort in the budget deal of 1997 and a status quo budget for 1998, which would skirt controversy. And they expected to coast to a modest but satisfactory victory on November 3.



Around April Fool's Day, however, this strategy began to fall apart. Complacency would no longer do. The conservative grass-roots were unhappy; running out the legislative clock turned out to be harder than expected; and, most important, a couple of national polls showed Democrats pulling out to a sizable lead. Serious analysts outlined ways that the Democrats might pick up the 11 seats needed to win back the House.

Suddenly, the Republicans woke up. Suddenly, they were interested in a national message on taxes, education, China, and the social issues. Suddenly, there was a lot of talk about the need to mobilize the base in an off-year election, to confront rather than cooperate.

So the conventional wisdom among Republicans about the election of '98 went from a pudding without a theme to a pudding made from a variety of standard themes. That was an improvement. But the conventional wisdom still misses the point. It fails to appreciate the significance of dynamics already underway. It does not yet see that the dominant issue of the 1998 election will be Bill Clinton and Bill Clinton alone: his perjury; his cover-up; his obstruction of justice; and, yes, his sexual misconduct.

This is a prospect that makes Republicans nervous. And it is not without risk. But the die has been cast.

Two developments have been crucial. One is the progress of Kenneth Starr's investigation, which will produce indictments, a report to the House, or both by the end of July. This will put the issue of presidential wrongdoing front and center. The second is the fact that, within the last few weeks, the question of the president's performance has become a partisan issue in Congress. After approximately three months of hesitation on both sides, Democrats have begun to line up behind Clinton, and Republicans behind Starr. They will not be able to turn back.

The key date may turn out to have been April 23. On that day, Henry Waxman led a phalanx of Democrats on Dan Burton's Government Reform and Oversight Committee in blocking the chairman's effort to immunize four campaign-finance wit-

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nesses—an effort supported by the Justice Department. This marked an escalation of the assault on Burton by his Democratic colleagues (now endorsed heartily by minority leader Dick Gephardt). On April 27, speaker Newt Gingrich decided to speak out. Ever since, the Democrats have responded in force, charging that the GOP has become obsessed with scandal and investigation.

Gingrich, in those late-April remarks, acknowledged that he was at a "turning point." He asserted that fundamental matters of truth-telling and lawfulness were at stake. He said that, never again, as long as he was speaker, would he make a speech without commenting on this topic. And he hoped that "every Democrat will seriously reconsider the direction this president is taking the party in. I believe that to become the party of cover-up and corruption would be a devastating blow to this country's future, and I hope no Democrat will follow down that road."

But there has been no reconsideration, and Democrats are far down that road. Democrats, more and more, are stepping forward to defend Clinton and to denounce Republicans as the party of scandal-mongering. Republicans are rallying behind Starr and denouncing the Democrats as the party of cover-up and corruption. Each party is apprehensive about its spokesmen. Each will be tempted to temporize, even to draw back. But the parties are on a course of fundamental confrontation that must end in the defeat of the one and the triumph of the other.

Though neither party is yet willing to face up to it, the shape of the fall campaign is clear. By October, the issue of Clinton as president will be center stage, to the exclusion of almost everything else. On the stump, Republicans will ask, Do you want a Republican Congress to check and perhaps move against this criminal and contemptuous president? The Democrats, for their part, will ask, Do you want a Democratic House to put a stop to this unjustified, bitter war against a successful president, one who was elected twice and presides over a roaring economy?

That will be the issue.

Politicians, jittery as they are, may wish to reread the prophetic words of author Mark Helprin, in a *Wall Street Journal* piece from October 1997. For Republicans, wrote Helprin, "there can be only one visceral theme, one battle, one task"—"to address the question of William Jefferson Clinton's fitness for office in light of the many crimes, petty and otherwise, that surround, imbue, and color his tenure. The president must be made subject to the law."

Thanks to Monica Lewinsky and Linda Tripp—and, of course, Ken Starr—Helprin's call to arms carries a new urgency. Starr's report will reveal, in Helprin's words, "a field of battle clearly laid down." The lines have been drawn. What Republicans now need is the nerve to fight. They must stand for, to quote Helprin again, "the rejection of intimidation, the rejection of lies, the rejection of manipulation, the rejection of disingenuous pretense, and a revul-

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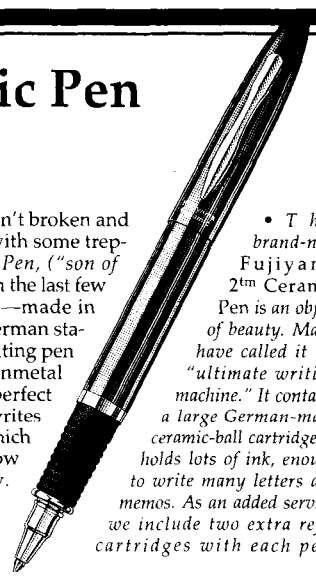

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sion for the sordid crimes and infractions the president has brought to his office."

If they do that, they will win big in November. And their victory will be more than a rejection of Clinton. It will be a rejection of Clintonism—a rejection of defining the presidency, and our public morality, down.

William Kristol is editor and publisher of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

THE EDUCATION PARTY

by Matthew Rees

A FEW MONTHS AGO, Republican education policy was in disarray. Proposals from the Clinton administration had put the GOP on the defensive, and the only Republican idea that was gaining any prominence was one many Republicans considered at odds with party principles—the federal funding of 100,000 new teachers.

Suddenly, the tide has turned. Republicans are no longer talking about 100,000 new teachers, and they've blocked nearly everything the White House has thrown at them. More important, they've begun to pass conservative, market-oriented bills that are chipping away at the Democrats' advantage on education. The stakes are high. Sen. Joe Lieberman, one of the few Democrats friendly to conservative-style education reform, says "there's a possibility of some political losses if we [Democrats] continue to be defensive about the status quo." Republicans agree. "If we can turn the education issue to our advantage," says GOP pollster Frank Luntz, "we will own the political landscape for a generation."

While education was briefly a GOP-dominated issue in the 1980s, Republicans are still recovering from the wounds of 1995, when their entire agenda seemed to consist of abolishing the Department of Education. Today, they recognize that abolition was too much, too soon, and they appreciate the value of less dramatic proposals. "Now we're doing things that have more support in the hinterlands than in Washington," says one Republican senator, Rick Santorum.

The effort to improve the party's education image has been helped by the intransigence of congressional Democrats, who routinely oppose every Republican proposal, no matter how modest. For example, Republican senator Paul Coverdell, a year ago, proposed allowing state and local agencies to use federal funds in behalf of children who have been victimized by crime at their schools and wish to transfer. Amazingly, nearly every Democratic senator—and even a few Republicans—voted against the proposal. And while the idea was later abandoned, the GOP is planning to highlight the vote during the fall campaign.

The Republicans' incremental approach has helped quiet lingering fears that they are intent on dismantling public education. Their strategy is seen in another Coverdell proposal—this one to allow for IRA-like education-savings accounts. From the moment it gained traction in the Senate last year, the bill was denounced by the National Education Association and its political servant, the Democratic party. The White House so disliked the measure that President Clinton, in a letter to House speaker Newt Gingrich, threatened to veto the balanced-budget agreement if it were included. (Republican leaders agreed to remove the proposal.)

But the intensity of Democratic opposition let the Republicans know they were on to something. So they didn't let up. The Coverdell bill passed the House late last year (with Gingrich as its main sponsor), then encountered roadblocks in the Senate. Not all Democrats were happy with this obstruction, however. When education secretary Richard Riley met with Senate Democrats in March, some of them—Dianne Feinstein, Joe Biden, and Bob Torricelli—gave him a tongue-lashing for the White House's refusal to negotiate with Republicans over Coverdell.

GOP persistence paid off. Senate Democrats filibustered the bill for two weeks, but minority leader Tom Daschle eventually agreed to a vote. On April 23, 56 senators supported the bill, and the vote received extensive coverage in the media.

While only five Democrats voted for education-savings accounts, more of them wanted to. Some objected to other provisions of the bill, but many simply caved in to the heavy lobbying of the NEA, the White House, and Daschle. One Democratic staffer says that if the Coverdell proposal had been a "free vote"—one in which the party leadership takes no position—at least half the Democrats in the Senate would have voted yes. Daschle himself had recognized the potential appeal of the bill last year and prepared a scaled-down version of it. But the NEA and the White House were so vehemently opposed,

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he never bothered to introduce it. Democrats are nervous over their opposition to Coverdell, and right to be: Polls find that some 70 percent of Americans support education-savings accounts.

The debate over the bill did reveal some small schisms among Democrats. Robert Byrd, the venerable West Virginia Democrat, backed the measure, giving a speech in which he questioned the Democratic orthodoxy that more spending will improve education. "The public school system had better shape up," warned Byrd, "or else public support for it is going to completely erode." Joe Lieberman also supported the Coverdell bill and concedes that "Republicans have been a source of some creative new ideas" on education policy.

There is a second part of the GOP education agenda—a proposal by House majority leader Dick Armey to provide 2,000 low-income students in Washington, D.C., with scholarships worth up to $3,200 to attend the school of their choice. The bill has already passed the House and Senate, and on May 7, Gingrich and Armey traveled to a black neighborhood in the District to promote the bill. Democrats—including Eleanor Holmes Norton, the capital's non-voting representative in the House—predictably derided the vouchers as chump change.

But this proposal, like Coverdell's, is causing some Democrats to wonder about their party's defense of the status quo. Jim Moran delivered an impassioned speech in the House calling on his fellow Democrats to support the bill. And in the Senate, Joe Biden announced that, while he had traditionally opposed vouchers for private schools, he had changed his mind. Moreover, Biden was dismissive of Democratic arguments that vouchers are unconstitutional and would ruin the public schools.

The GOP's activity is beginning to have an impact. The Republican National Committee's internal polls show that, though the Democrats held a 21-point advantage over the GOP on education last June, that gap is down to 13 points. "We've begun to neutralize education as an offensive weapon for Democrats," says Steve Law, executive director of the Senate GOP campaign committee. This has some Republicans talking about making education one of *their* themes in the 1998 campaign—which would have been a pipe dream two years ago.

But Republicans still have a long way to go before they overhaul federal education policy, says Chester Finn, a conservative education guru. And in the meantime, President Clinton is likely to veto the education-savings and D.C.-vouchers legislation, rendering their work for naught.

Yet the pressure against a veto—of the education-savings bill especially—is considerable. Two of Coverdell's Democratic allies, Bob Torricelli and Bob Graham, have urged Clinton to sign it. They're scared their Democratic colleagues will suffer politically for repeatedly opposing such a popular proposal. And Democrats could find themselves embarrassed once again if Republicans hold votes later this year on overriding Clinton's probable vetoes.

Republicans, in other words, are finally on the offensive on education. Will they keep it up?

Matthew Rees is a staff writer for THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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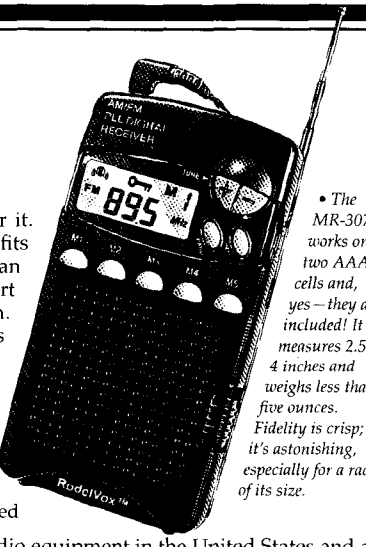

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SMILE WHEN YOU SAY THAT

'Civility' As the Last Refuge of the Guilty

By David Frum

"Civility in politics: going, going, gone." So complained a headline in the *New York Times* this winter, and since then hardly a week has gone by without some new offense being reported against good manners and even common decency. Cuddly felon Webb Hubbell worries that a deranged special prosecutor will indict his dog and cat to pressure him to lie about the president. The Annenberg Center released a study purporting to show that rudeness on the floor of Congress has sunk to depths unplumbed since the mid-1930s. Two of the country's most praised thinkers, Stephen Carter of Yale and Deborah Tannen of Georgetown, have published books this spring deploring the incivility of American life and politics. Only a couple of weeks ago, *Washington Post* columnist David Broder unburdened himself of the judgment that the verbal excesses of Newt Gingrich deserve equal excoriation with the misdeeds of President Clinton. Not since Zoe Baird had to withdraw from consideration as attorney general because she neglected to pay her taxes has there been so much viewing-with-alarm in Washington. We are present, in other words, at the birth of a great national cliché. And like all clichés, it tells us a great deal more about the people who mouth it than about the situation those people imagine they are describing.

Are we in fact living through an epidemic of incivility in politics? To anyone familiar with American political history, it's an absurd claim. Politics today is gentler, more polite, even more mealy-mouthed than at any other time in American history. Leave alone what Henry Clay had to say about Andrew Jackson. Only 25 years ago, George McGovern was stumping the country charging that the Watergate break-in "was the kind of thing you expected under a person like Hitler." Fifteen years ago, Ronald Reagan's opponents were accusing him of starving the poor and blundering into a nuclear war. Today, Democratic and Republican congressmen go on retreats together with their wives and children, and presidential debates begin with President Clinton urging that the candidates restrict themselves to exchanging "ideas" not "insults"—and his opponent meekly complying.

Of course it's true, even in the era of the soccer mom, that people in politics sometimes say rough things about each other. And of course it's also true that politeness is to be preferred to impoliteness. But there are three things that ought to be noticed about the current wave of concern over incivility.

The first is how brazenly one-sided it is. Tannen's new book, for instance, repeatedly cites criticisms of President Clinton as examples of "vituperative, mean-spirited, personal attacks" that "stir up animosities that make it harder for people to work together." But on the one occasion she discusses Independent Counsel Ken Starr—a man who has been the target of more than his share of personal vituperation—she herself credulously repeats just such an attack: Starr is "a prominent Republican known for his animosity toward the president." It is curious, to put it mildly, that the sorts of concerns about incivility being voiced now, when a Democratic president finds himself under scrutiny, were utterly absent in, say, 1987, during the Bork hearings or in 1964, in the midst of a media campaign against Barry Goldwater that makes the treatment of President Clinton look by comparison like a tickertape parade.

Stephen Carter, to his credit, takes note of the "hysterical and vicious" campaign against Bork as an example of incivility. And even Tannen will concede that unjust things have sometimes been said about Republicans (like the story that George Bush didn't know what a supermarket scanner was). But in all the chin-stroking over incivility, the whiff of Democratic self-pity is strong. Clinton has repeatedly complained that he has been subjected to more and harsher criticism than any previous president. His memory is short. No protesters stand under his window shouting, "hey, hey LBJ, how many kids did you kill today." No Garry Wills is writing about him, winning respectful reviews by suggesting that he is mad or moronic. Nothing that any Republican has said about him remotely approaches the seriousness of the false charge that former Carter official Gary Sick flung at

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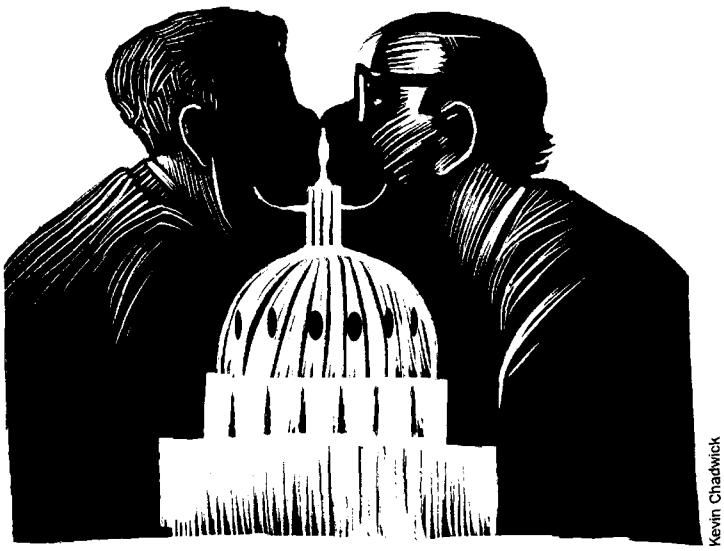
Ronald Reagan: that he treasonably plotted to delay the release of the Iranian hostages.

The second thing that needs remembering is that the obligation to speak respectfully of the president is complemented by the president's obligation to behave respectably. How, please, is the Monica Lewinsky story to be reported on *without* prurience? Yes, presidents are entitled to a zone of privacy, in which their ordinary human failings can pass without remark. If a president has a mistress discreetly tucked away, if he tried marijuana in college, if he eats a little more than he should, if he and his wife consume a couple of bottles of expensive claret every Sunday night in the family quarters, if he was once treated for VD—those are nuggets of information that ought, in the ordinary course of events, to go unpublicized. But the zone of privacy has limits. If the charges against this president are true, he has himself directly and personally contributed to a huge increase in incivility in American life: by undermining the rule of law, by engaging in sexual adventuring too gross, flagrant, and irresponsible to ignore. And if the Clinton partisans want to maintain (as many of them seem to) that White House sexual hijinks—no matter how reckless—are inherently private and should never be publicly aired, one has to wonder why we failed to hear from them when Simon & Schuster decided to publish Kitty Kelley's prurient biography of Nancy Reagan and the *New York Times* chose to reprint the book's most lurid allegations on its front page. Where were they when Gail Sheehy was delving into the marital histories of Newt Gingrich and Bob Dole in the pages of *Vanity Fair*?



Kevin Chadwick

But what must above all be noticed in all the fingerpointing over the breakdown of political civility is this: whether the airing of the charges against President Clinton detracts from society's civility depends largely on whether they are true. The president's defenders have never been able to produce any convincing reason to believe that they are not. Which is why those defenders are so frantic to convince the public that the charges should never have been permitted a hearing in the first place. Throughout his career, Clinton has specialized in the non-denial denial, in dealing with embarrassing allegations by abusing the alleger. He has taught that technique to an entire generation of Democratic politicians and sympathetic commentators. Complaints about incivility, in their hands, are just the latest version of this trick.

Clinton will not or cannot exculpate himself. As hard as he and his aides try, they cannot minimize the gravity of the charges against him. So what are they left with? Only an attack on the propriety of bringing charges against a president at all.

One of the amazing things about the new Clintonized liberalism of the 1990s is its proclivity for overnight swivels in the party line that would have done proud the Stalinists of old. For years the intrepid Archibald Cox was the very model of a heroic public servant; suddenly here is Professor Henry Louis Gates of Harvard hailing Gordon Liddy and Rosemary Woods in the *New Yorker* as the real heroes of Watergate. Throughout Vietnam and Watergate liberals told us that presidential lying and secrecy corrode the fabric of democracy; suddenly here is Charles Lane of the *New Republic* telling us on C-Span that presidential lying is necessary and even laudable. Scarcely six months ago, Vice President Al Gore applauded Ellen DeGeneres for forcing Americans to confront in their living rooms the most recondite forms of sexuality; now we are all summoned to rediscover the merits of delicacy, propriety, and discretion. It's headspinning.

Look: Sometimes even liars can tell the truth. More politeness on the floor of Congress would indeed be a good thing. That's just as true now as it was when Rep. John Lewis was comparing Newt Gingrich to Hitler. America would indeed benefit from greater deference and respect toward executive branch officials. That's just as true now as it was

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when Laurence Walsh subpoenaed Caspar Weinberger's private diary. Americans could indeed use a huge, heaping dose of trust in the good faith of people of opposing views. That's just as true now as it was when President Clinton was suggesting that Rush Limbaugh was responsible for the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building. By all means, let's have more civility. But let's not forget that besides all the good things it can mean, for this administration civility is the last refuge of the guilty. ♦

We Must Remember This

A Veteran's Memorial Day Lament

By Bob McManus

A shooting war was lurking in Asia on the morning of April 11, 1963, though of course none of us knew it. Memories of the missiles of October lingered, and we were impatient young Cold Warriors—finally about to move on from the Navy's submarine school at New London, Conn.

There were 30 or so in our class; we'd studied together, and gone to sea on occasion, for close to three months. They'd told us all about the risks of service in submarines and, indeed, even trained us to meet some of them. Duty aboard any warship is a gamble, but the boats were deemed especially problematic—for good reason, as we were about to learn.

It was 8 A.M. Our instructor, a World War II combat vet with the colorful ribbons and pins to prove it, entered the classroom, turned to face us—and quietly announced the loss, with 129 officers and men, of the *USS Thresher*.

Then he wept.

The tears fell softly, with dignity. The submarine service is tightly knit, and old friends had died ungently the day before. We sat motionless, not precisely having heard angels' wings in the instructor's words—but now there wasn't a man in the room who didn't know in his bones how fragile a reed life can be.

That afternoon, on schedule, we received orders to the fleet. I would serve aboard two submarines in the ensuing 36 months, never to dwell on that April morning—quite deliberately so—but never to forget it, either. There would be tense moments, but no grave peril. In that we were lucky, my classmates and I.

Bob McManus is deputy editorial-page editor of the New York Post.

America lost two other submarines during the Cold War: the *USS Cochino*, in the Norwegian Sea in 1949 with seven dead; and the *USS Scorpion*, in 1968 off the Azores with all hands—99 officers and men—dead. During World War II, 52 boats had gone to sea and failed to return. The first lost in action at sea was the *USS Shark*, sunk by a Japanese warship in the Celebes Sea with a crew of 58 on Feb. 11, 1942; the last was the *USS Bullhead*, sunk by Japanese aerial bombs with 84 officers and men in Japanese coastal waters on Aug. 6, 1945.

All in all, 3,505 American submariners in World War II were lost to combat—fully 20 percent of those who served in the boats. Proportionally, casualties in the "silent service" were heaviest in the Pacific campaign—exceeding even those of the justly storied U.S. Marine Corps.

On this coming Memorial Day, as always, submarine veterans will gather all across the nation quietly to memorialize their own. Bells will toll—52 times, to mark the lost boats of the Good War; then thrice more, for *Cochino*, *Thresher*, and *Scorpion*. Wreaths will be cast upon moving waters.

This is meant, principally, to honor departed heroes. But there is also an implied celebration of community: a commemoration of shared experiences, of commonality of purpose, of a time when circumstance sometimes demanded the extraordinary from quite ordinary men—who did not disappoint. These are the happy few, who gave some, remembering their brothers, who gave all.

Not so long ago, Americans accepted wartime service for what it is—a cruel lottery. Men under arms present themselves, more or less at random, to mortal danger. Some are killed; others are wounded; most

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live to fight another day—and eventually to return to a grateful nation that never thought to doubt that honor attaches to all who go in harm's way for honorable purposes.

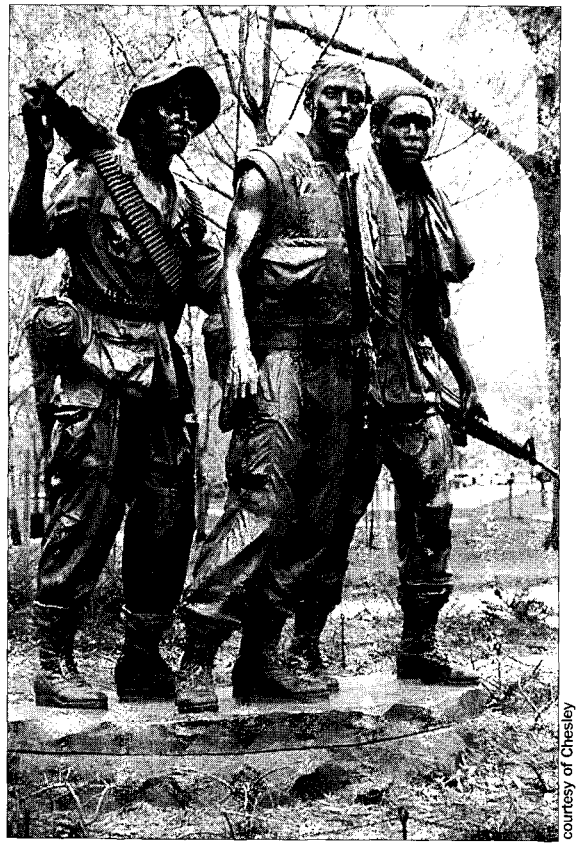
Walk a dusty mile along Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg, which commands the upsloped meadows where Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was effectively broken—and the fate of a great nation was decided—in heat and smoke and blood and horror on the afternoon of July 3, 1863. Read the big monuments, one by one and unit by unit. Here, chiseled into cold stone, you'll find the names of the men who fought on that day—from general officers to drummer boys. Yes, battle deaths are noted. But not morbidly.

In the national consciousness there were only heroes at Gettysburg, and the memorials reflect this. So, too, do those honoring what brave men did at Belleau Wood; at Midway and D-Day and Bloody Tarawa and the Hurtgen Forest; at Pusan and Inchon and in the hellish retreat from the Chosin Reservoir.

Some were braver than others, of course, and some were not brave at all. That's the way of war. But America made no real distinctions: Memorials—in village squares, small-town halls, and big-city church vestibules—list together all the men who went to war. And, just as at Cemetery Ridge, appropriate note is taken of those who died. The utility of this is subtle, but significant: Properly, the fallen are commemorated—but in a context that validates the participation of all who served the country in times of crisis.

Vietnam, of course, was different.

Vietnam produced The Wall—which honors, if that's the appropriate word, those who died in America's longest war. But, pointedly, it does not honor those who served and then came home. And this is an important distinction—one certainly worth keeping in mind on May 25 as Memorial Day images fill the nation's television screens.



courtesy of Chesley

The name McManus—my name—appears seven times on The Wall. There's Charles Verne, from Woodland, Ala.; Frank Joseph, from Jackson Heights, Queens; Jerry Doyne, from Atlanta, Louisiana; John, from Manhattan; Mark Lawrence, from Los Angeles; Michael George, from Bridgeport, Mich.; Robert Francis, from Wayne, N.J.; and Truman Joseph, from Mansfield, Conn.

How many McManuses actually went to Vietnam? I haven't a clue. Am I grateful that I wasn't one of them? Yes, of course. And this seems almost to be the purpose of The Wall. By focusing solely on the 58,202 dead, the monument stirs relief in those who were not called. It helps the gentlemen who were called, but refused to answer, rationalize their behavior. And—there is no euphemistic way to put this—it casts those who went and died as, principally, victims.

Where is there a wholly honest national representation of the 8.7 million young men who went to Vietnam between 1964 and 1973, acquitted themselves with—yes—honor, returned, and got on with their lives? Nowhere. Certainly the *Three Soldiers* statue forced upon the Vietnam Memorial by veterans who clearly understood the real purpose of The Wall seems purposely to underscore the victimization theme. How else to characterize the sculpted infantrymen's vaguely heroic, but obvious, distress?

This merely reinforces, for future generations, the message of The Wall itself: that service in Vietnam was somehow tinged with dishonor.

Surely, the Vietnam Memorial disconnect will make it harder to fill the ranks the next time—just as The Wall's morbid fascination with death to the exclusion of all else will concentrate disproportionate public attention on potential casualties when future conflicts arise.

In this sense, then, it can fairly be said that The Wall is the final, and arguably the most significant, victory of the antiwar movement. Scores of thousands

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of Vietnam veterans resolutely pay no heed to any of this, of course. Nor should they. On Memorial Day, they'll go to The Wall, or to church, or just to a quiet place, to hold fallen comrades in their thoughts, if only for a moment or two.

So know this well: They do not believe the men they honor to have been victims, nor themselves—and neither should you. For surely they were not. But what a pity that still these veterans stand alone, 25 long years later. ♦

Slouching Towards Infanticide

Why a Ban on Partial-birth Abortion Is Not Enough

By Hadley Arkes

Sometime in the fall, before the elections in November, the pro-life leadership in Congress will bring back the bill to forbid partial-birth abortions. Only the veto by President Clinton prevented it from becoming law in 1996. But for the opponents of the bill, that veto bought time, and in that time the federal courts have been at work. When the pro-life leadership returns to that bill in the fall, they may discover that they have been reduced to acting out a gesture with no consequence: that the federal courts have boxed them in, and they are no longer free to legislate.

For over the past five months, federal judges have been blocking the enforcement of laws on partial-birth abortion that were enacted by the states: Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Nebraska, Arizona. In all, the laws in eleven states have been challenged, and all of them have been either struck down or put on hold. By the time a federal bill is passed, the judges will have put in place several layers of arguments and precedents, all now casting the most serious doubt on the constitutionality of a federal ban. Those precedents will no doubt be cited by the opponents of the bill, as they stage their resistance and latch on to anything that even faintly resembles a moral argument.

For the most part, those laws in the states were carefully drafted, and while they offered their own variations, they all took as the core of their concern the ghastly procedure that has fixed the attention of the Congress and inspired a recoil in the country: A surgeon plunges a sharp instrument into the base of the skull of a child half-delivered, whose body is in the birth canal but whose head is still in the womb; the brains are then suctioned out so that the head can be collapsed and the child more easily removed in one piece. Most of these procedures are performed at five or six months into a pregnancy, and late enough in some cases that the child could survive a normal delivery.

The laws in the states have been confined, quite precisely, to this procedure of abortion; and yet the judges have claimed to find a disabling "vagueness" in what the legislatures have sought to forbid. And as they have warmed to their argument, the judges have made explicit what has been lurking all the while in the decisions of the Supreme Court: most notably, that birth marks no distinction of consequence for the law of abortion; that no fact, no evidence, about the state of the child even at the point of delivery has any standing if it is used to limit the freedom to choose abortion.

With a show of inventiveness, the judges have blocked every path for defending these laws on partial-birth abortions. But beneath the language of the decisions, a political message is being conveyed. The political class that forms the judiciary is making the point, in a steely way, that it will not brook even the slightest restriction on the "abortion liberty," which it is coming to regard as the first freedom. Yet, it seems to have gone unnoticed that the judges have also confirmed the political strategy that lay behind the the legislators' effort to forbid partial-birth abortions.

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Part of the purpose behind that strategy was to induce the partisans of abortion to defend abortion on the terrain of their hardest cases—not abortions after rape and incest, but the destruction of a partially delivered child. And now we find the judges doing precisely that: They tell us that we cannot legislate against abortions performed even on children partially delivered, with their feet dangling out of the birth canal. We cannot do that, according to the judges, because these abortions are indistinguishable from a large number of abortions that must remain legitimate. And so, in the Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, Judge Cornelia Kennedy insisted that it might not always be so easy to distinguish these abortions from so-called D & E abortions (dilation and evacuation), where the child is cut up. For in that procedure, too, the surgeon may have to use clamps to compress the head. And in some cases, as she pointed out, "some physicians compress the head by using suction to remove the intracranial contents" (*Women's Medical Professional Corp.* v. *Voinovich*).

The willingness of the judges to say these things should mark a new stage in the politics and law of abortion—and a new opportunity for the pro-life movement, if it can summon the wit to act. This move by the judges brings out dramatically what the bill on partial-birth abortion sought to teach—and indeed, teaching was part of the purpose of that bill.

The bill on partial-birth abortions sprang from the strategy of the "modest first step." That strategy would not focus on a constitutional amendment to ban all abortions; it would begin at the clearest point, where even the partisans of abortion would not deny that they were dealing with a human life. The strategy also meant to draw on the surprising points of agreement among the public. The polls revealed persistently that even people who called themselves "pro-choice" thought that some abortions were not justified and should rightly be restrained by the law. For the most part, Americans thought that abortions should not be chosen for reasons that were less than grave. They did not think that abortions were justified to relieve financial strain, to avoid embarrassment, or even to permit a young woman to finish school.

But only one person in ten understood that all of these abortions are now permitted under the law of *Roe* v. *Wade* and its companion case, *Doe* v. *Bolton*. The strategy of the modest first step was designed then to break out news that most of the public would find startling: namely, that abortions could be performed through the entire length of the pregnancy—and even after the child came out. In one notable case in the 1970s (*Floyd* v. *Anders*), a child had survived an abortion for 20 days, and the question was posed as to whether there had been an obligation to preserve his life. The answer, tendered by Judge Clement Haynsworth, was that there had not been: The mother had decided on abortion, and therefore "the fetus in this case was not a person whose life state law could protect." The baby, twenty days out of the womb, was still a "fetus" because the mother had decided she didn't want it.

And so some of us suggested, as early as 1988, the most modest first step of all: that we move simply to protect the child who survives an abortion. With that step we would plant this premise: that the right of the child to receive the protections of the law cannot pivot on the question of whether anyone happens to want her; that the child is a real being, with standing in the law. Give us that premise, we said, and we can eventually unravel the "right to abortion."

Douglas Johnson, the skilled lobbyist for National Right to Life, was rather skeptical. He thought that legislation of this kind was so modest as to be meaningless, that even ardent pro-abortionists could vote for it. And besides, there might be too few cases to justify legislation. But in 1992, Johnson showed fine political judgment when he seized upon an issue that could fit the purposes of the modest first step, with even more dramatic effect. In that year he learned of a paper by Dr. Martin Haskell, who offered an account of a procedure of abortion he had performed, late in pregnancies, over 700 times. The procedure was called "D & X" (dilation and extraction), and Haskell's description of it was artlessly explicit.

The pro-life leaders would offer a title more descriptive, less euphemistic—they would call it "partial-birth" abortion, and they sprang forward with a federal bill to ban this procedure. They also explained in ordinary language what it meant: an abortion performed when a physician "partially vaginally delivers a living fetus before killing the fetus and completing the delivery." The hearings on this bill in Congress, and the subsequent arguments, did manage to diffuse through the country news that the public found shocking. The sentiment building in Congress was bolstered when the American Medical Association came out in opposition to this procedure, the first procedure of abortion that the AMA had opposed. In explaining its opposition, the AMA would register the professional judgment that this procedure was "never the only appropriate procedure and has no history in peer-reviewed medical literature or in accepted medical practice."

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When it came to a vote, the Republicans would show remarkable cohesion: 214 voted for the ban in the House, with only 15 drifting into opposition. In the Senate, the Republicans voted 44-7 in favor of the bill. With this kind of support among Republicans, the bill mustered a margin in the House large enough to override a presidential veto (286-129). In the Senate, however, the margin of victory was slightly narrower, and it appears that the level of support is still not high enough to overcome a second veto by President Clinton.

Despite the remarkable precision of the states' laws on partial-birth abortion, the judges have flexed their arts of interpretation to find them fatally "vague." And yet, the judges are not really complaining of a want of clarity in the statutes. Their contention, rather, is that there is no clear way to distinguish the killing done of the child near birth and the killing routinely done in other abortions, even grislier. For the most part, the framers of these statutes have made it clear that they are not challenging those other abortions, that they are limiting their focus to those abortions performed at the point of birth. And so, in Arizona, federal judge Richard Bilby acknowledged that the purpose of the bill on partial-birth abortions was, as the drafters said, to "erect a firm barrier against infanticide" (*Planned Parenthood* v. *Woods*).

But the remarkable thing now is that the judges are explaining, in language suitably muffled, that this is exactly what we cannot do. In Illinois, federal district judge Charles Kocoras noted the predicament of the physician, who "may 'deliver' or 'partially deliver' an intact, living fetus or a part of a 'living' fetus that continues to have a heartbeat" (*Hope Clinic* v. *Ryan*). As Groucho Marx used to say, "Are you going to believe me, or your own eyes?" Any ordinary person, looking on the scene, might ask, Why are you killing an infant with a beating heart? Or why would you assume that this child, emerging with a beating heart, should not summon the efforts of the staff to preserve her life? But Judge Kocoras's mind has been furnished by our jurisprudence on abortion, and what it tells him now is that the things plainly before our eyes do not count: There is no child with a beating heart; the existence of that child, in that condition, is overridden by the right of a woman to "terminate" her pregnancy.

With these kinds of words, the judges have provided the clearest distillation: It is no longer legitimate to "erect a firm barrier against infanticide," because even outright infanticide is indistinguishable from a large number of the abortions now performed routinely. And with these words the judges should concentrate the minds of the pro-life leadership in Congress. If congressional leaders continue on their current course, if they sleepwalk into another round of votes on partial-birth abortion, then they are likely only to impair the cause, for the judges have now cut them off at the knees.

By doing nothing, the pro-lifers will acquiesce in this fate prepared for them by the judges. On the other hand, they could take this latest round of decisions as an event worth noticing in itself; an event that sharpens the issue—and needs to be addressed, decisively, in turn before anything can be done on partial-birth abortions. After all, the same doctors in Illinois who claim that they are inhibited, "chilled," threatened by a state law on partial-birth abortions will make precisely the same claim about a federal law on the same subject. They will take their case before the same friendly federal judge, and they will produce, no doubt, the same result. A bill on partial-birth abortions will mean nothing unless these new barriers, cast up by the judges, can be cleared away.

But the point has been pressed on the other side, that the bill on partial-birth abortion still has its value: It still brings news to the public, and it still generates embarrassment for President Clinton and the congressmen who stand with him on this issue. That may be, but the bill may have exhausted its uses here. It has already driven down the poll numbers in the support for abortion; but those numbers will mean nothing unless they can be turned into a legislative result. Lest anyone forget, one of the purposes behind the strategy of the modest first step was to show that Congress could indeed legislate on the subject: that under the logic of the separation of powers, Congress has the authority to flesh out, in legislation, any rights that the Supreme Court has the authority to declare. And in filling out those rights, the Congress may establish their limits.

In the case of abortion, it is the sense of that limit—the boundary of abortion—that is needed now more than ever. As it turns out, then, the most decisive thing that the Congress could do in countering the courts is to return to the "first step" that was the most modest of all: It could erect that simple bar to infanticide by insisting that the child who survives an abortion be protected. Even the people who call themselves pro-choice do not think that they are in favor of outright infanticide. They must think there is a distinction between abortion and infanticide, and if there is, it must begin at least at birth. There would

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be no need to say anything about second trimesters or even third; this measure could be the sparest of all.

The pro-life leaders thought that the bill on partial-birth abortion actually gave them a chance to reach into the second trimester with restrictions on abortion, because most of these partial-birth abortions are performed in that period. But that supposed advantage was turned into a lever to be used against the bill: Precisely because the bill reached into the second trimester, it was argued by the judges that the bill was treading on the freedom to perform abortions well before the point of birth, on fetuses that would not survive outside the womb.

In the meantime, as the framers of the bill leaped ahead in this way, they had neglected to fill in a critical step: They had never sought to establish, in the first place, that the child was a being, a real entity, whose injuries could be a matter of concern to the law. It was only when that cardinal point was neatly blocked from view that Bill Clinton could veto the bill because of a concern, gravely proclaimed, for the health of the pregnant woman: What of that being whose head was being punctured and her brains sucked out? What of her health or injuries? The injuries to the child simply did not register; they were screened from view for the same reason that the child had no standing in the law, as a being whose injuries "counted."

CONGRESS SHOULD INSIST THAT EVEN THE RIGHT TO ABORTION MUST HAVE ITS RIGHTFUL LIMIT. WE MUST DRAW THE LINE AT INFANTICIDE.

But it should be clear now that the bill on partial-birth abortion cannot be enacted until we return to that elementary point and fill in that missing premise for the law. Congress could summon even broader majorities across party lines, to insist that even the right to abortion must have its rightful limit; that however we describe ourselves, as pro-choice or pro-life, we must draw the line at infanticide.

A ban on infanticide could be part of the bill on partial-birth abortion, but that might simply give Bill Clinton cover in vetoing the whole package. In that event, the Congress could send up this measure standing alone, as an anti-infanticide bill. It would still cover only a handful of cases, but that would no longer be so important; for the bill would be a response this time to the crisis brought into being by the courts, in this recent wave of decisions. Those decisions supply all of the justification that is required now for this simplest of acts.

It is curious that even certain pro-life lawyers were willing to presume in the past that the judges took birth to mark the limit to any right to abortion; the point seemed so obvious that it could be taken for granted. In a case in 1983, Justice Lewis Powell noted the opinion of one doctor, that "the abortion patient has a right not only to be rid of the growth, called a fetus . . . but also has a right to a dead fetus." Powell pronounced this argument "remarkable." But his comment, offered in a footnote, did not constitute the same thing as declaring that the doctor's understanding was wrong; and still less did it offer an explanation as to why it was wrong.

Part of the object of this anti-infanticide bill is to force the judges to face up to that question, and it could be done through the simplest of devices. Congress could append a preamble, in the old style, explaining its purpose and understanding: that the child is a being with a claim to the protection of the law; that her right to be protected by the law does not hinge on whether anyone happens to "want" her. If the judges reject that modest claim, if they strike down this kind of measure, then even a public anaesthetized by the Clinton years is likely to be delivered from its slumber.

With the collaboration of many seasoned, pro-life lawyers, a bill of this kind was drafted a few years ago. It is in the files and could be sprung at once. But the thing we must not do at this moment is drift into another round of voting on partial-birth abortions as though it were "business as usual" and nothing had changed. Edmund Burke once remarked that the political man "who could read the political sky will see a hurricane in a cloud no bigger than a hand at the very edge of the horizon." The evidence facing the pro-life leaders is no longer that subtle: They have a box score with eleven decisions, and a trend that is unmistakable. Either they strike back now at those decisions, or the vote on partial-birth abortions will be futile.

Political leaders with the wit to see what is before them would recognize that the judges have moved deftly to undo their work. But from another angle, the pro-life politicians may see that the judges have confirmed the wisdom of their original strategy of starting at the point of birth, and that the judges, with their arrogance, may have stepped into a trap. The question now is whether the pro-life leadership in Congress is agile enough to spring that trap. ♦

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Were American missile secrets given to Communist China by Bill Clinton's biggest political donor?

The Pentagon and Justice Department wanted to know. But early this year, President Clinton took steps to make sure their investigation was killed, according to an exclusive New York Times report which appeared last month.

Did Bernard Schwartz and Loral sell sensitive dual-use missile technology?

The largest single contributor (more than $1 million) to the Democratic campaigns of 1994 and 1996 is Bernard Schwartz, CEO of Loral Space and Communications Ltd. A secret report prepared by the Defense Department in May 1997 revealed that Loral and another company, Hughes Electronic Corp., had provided China's space industry with specific technological expertise that allowed it to strengthen its nuclear and missile capabilities. The Pentagon report concluded that, as a result, "*United States national security has been harmed.*" This report triggered a criminal investigation by the Department of Justice.

Did President Clinton undercut a criminal investigation of Schwartz's company by the Justice Department?

President Clinton's response? Last February, Mr. Clinton granted a special waiver allowing Loral to provide even more highly-sensitive information that will further improve Communist China's ability to hit targets in the United States in the event of a future conflict. According to the *New York Times*, the President's decision effectively undercut the Department of Justice's criminal investigation.

Are the President's rich friends off the hook today when American families are targeted by Communist missiles tonight?

The President's waiver didn't just get his friends at Loral and Hughes out of a criminal investigation. Two years ago, during the crisis in the Taiwan Straits, a Chinese official warned that China had the capability to hit the people of Los Angeles with an intercontinental nuclear-tipped missile. Now that threat has become even more ominous.

Is America's long-term security being sold out for the President's short-sighted political agenda?

Is this the way national security policy in the United States should be run? Or do we need to find out more about the export of our highest-level military technology to Beijing? Was there a connection between campaign contributions and leniency toward huge corporations suspected of giving away our defense secrets?

Will you call your Representatives and Senators today?

If you believe we need answers to all these questions, write or call your Congressional Representative and U.S. Senators today. It is time for Congress to stop the President's dangerous giveaway of American defense technology.

Call the U.S. Capitol today at 202-225-3121

Or write to your Congressional Representative and Senators at:

Senator:
The Honorable _____
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510

Congressional Representative:
The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20510

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THE REASON OF REVELATION

The Jewish Thought of Leo Strauss

By Peter Berkowitz

It took twenty-five years to get around to this anthology on Jewish philosophy and theology—perhaps because, even among many of his most devoted followers, Judaism has seldom been considered of fundamental importance to the thought of the political philosopher Leo Strauss. But now at last Kenneth Hart Green—associate professor of religion at the University of Toronto and author of the 1993 study *Jew and Philosopher: The Return to Maimonides in the Jewish Thought of Leo Strauss*—has gathered in one volume the evidence that Strauss took Jewish thought very seriously indeed. *Jewish Philosophy and the Crisis of Modernity: Essays and Lectures in Modern Jewish Thought*, one of five volumes in a SUNY Press series, *The Jewish Writings of Leo Strauss*, contains seventeen essays and lectures, all produced after 1945. The book finally demonstrates the centrality of Judaism for one of America's most influential teachers.

Strauss was born in Germany in 1899, sat in on the path-breaking seminars of the philosopher Martin Heidegger during the 1920s, left Germany in 1932 for France and then England, and, after arriving in the United States in 1938, joined numerous other émigré scholars at the New School for Social Research in New York City. In the 1950s and 1960s, at the peak of his career, he taught political science at the University of Chicago. There, a loyal band of students gathered around him, and many who attended his classes revered him as the wisest man they had ever met. He died in 1973, but he left a considerable number of students—Straussians, as they have come to be called—who went on to achieve distinction as scholars. Today, the students of those students of Strauss (and increasingly their own third-generation students) can be found at universities and colleges across the land.

In the academy, however, Straussians remain a discrete and insular minority in a determinedly hostile environment. According to the hostile consensus, Strauss's writings represent a perverse mix of ignorance, obscurity, and immorality. It is this charge of immorality that is particularly interesting. Until recently, the immorality of Strauss's teaching was held to be his conservatism and elitism. Lately, however, Strauss's critics have developed a new accusation: Far from being a conservative moralist, Strauss is, according to this new interpretation, a disciple of Nietzsche and a proponent in disguise of Nietzsche's radical critique of bourgeois morality. And even a fair number of Strauss's supporters—Laurence Lampert, most outspoken among them—have joined in this view that Strauss is, in all essentials, in agreement with Nietzsche.

Leo Strauss
Edited by Kenneth Hart Green
Jewish Philosophy and the Crisis of Modernity
Essays and Lectures in Modern Jewish Thought
SUNY Press, 505 pp., $24.95 paper

It's certainly true that Strauss held Nietzsche in high esteem and understood himself to owe a substantial debt to the great German immoralist. In a letter to Karl Löwith, a friend from the days both had attended Heidegger's seminars, Strauss declared, "I can only say that Nietzsche so dominated and bewitched me between my twenty-second and thirtieth year, that I literally believed everything that I understood of him." Three decades later, Strauss produced the most autobiographical of his writings: a long preface to the 1965 English language translation of his first book, *Spinoza's Critique of Religion*, originally published in 1930 while Strauss was a research fellow in Jewish philosophy at the Academy for the Science of Judaism in Berlin and dedicated to the memory of Franz Rosenzweig. In that preface, Strauss credits Nietzsche with having seen with unrivaled clarity that the morality of modern liberalism derives from and depends upon biblical faith.

Throughout his writings Strauss adduces Nietzsche as a brilliant guide to the leveling impulse at work in the democratic spirit. And a few years before his death, Strauss published an essay on Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil* in which he lauded the German philosopher's free-spirited skepticism as an inspiring model of philosophical exploration.

Nevertheless, those who view Strauss as a disciple of Nietzsche confuse abiding admiration with fundamental agreement. The result is to dishonor Strauss by suppressing the complexity of his judgment and the independence of his mind. In his letter to Löwith, Strauss not only indicates that after the age of thirty he broke free of Nietzsche's spell, but goes on to reproach Löwith for failing to see beyond Nietzsche's

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strengths to grasp the philosopher's failings:

> I think that you do not take seriously enough those intentions of Nietzsche which point beyond Nietzsche's teaching. . . . For it is not sufficient simply to stop where Nietzsche is no longer right; rather one must ask whether or not Nietzsche himself became untrue to his intention to repeat antiquity, and did so as a result of his confinement within modern presuppositions or in polemics against these.

Moreover, Strauss insists that—for all Nietzsche's devastating insights into the weaknesses of liberal democracy—Nietzsche both failed to see clearly liberal democracy's advantages and obscured through the extravagance of his rhetoric the good reasons for seeking to preserve liberal democracy. And much as he esteems Nietzsche's free-spirited skepticism, Strauss concludes that Nietzsche's way of thinking must be overcome. Nietzsche's philosophical explorations, Strauss argues, remained captive to and distorted by the dogmatic assumption that God is dead, and the explosive power of Nietzsche's critique of modernity simultaneously relied upon and denied reason's power to discern the shape of justice.

To understand the full significance of Strauss's encounter with Nietzsche, one must understand Strauss's reasons for turning to Nietzsche. Strauss always insisted that responsible interpretation begins with the effort to understand an author as he understood himself, his interests and intentions. And he revealed something of his own starting point in "Why We Remain Jews," a little-known lecture delivered at the University of Chicago Hillel House in 1962.

In that lecture, Strauss identifies the question that drove his scholarly investigations throughout his career: "I believe I can say, without any exaggeration, that since a very, very early time the main theme of my reflections has been what is called the 'Jewish Question.'" The statement obviously requires explanation, and explain it Strauss does throughout his writings, in numerous ways and from a variety of angles. But nowhere does he offer a more concentrated and powerful explanation than in the autobiographical preface to his book on Spinoza, where he begins with an arresting description of his situation as a Jew and a citizen: "The author was a young Jew born and raised in Germany who found himself in the grips of the theological-political predicament."

Both the theological and the political dimensions of the predicament derive, in Strauss's view, from the permanent structure of liberalism. Strauss had no illusions about the defects of the Weimar Republic, the weak government in Germany between the country's defeat in World War I and the rise of Hitler: the half-hearted commitment to the principles of liberal democracy, the resentment over what was perceived to be a vindictive settlement imposed on Germany in the Treaty of Versailles, the deep-rooted antipathy to Jews in German culture. But Strauss resists the temptation to explain the precarious situation of the Jews in Weimar as owing only to incidental features of liberal democracy in Germany.

TO UNDERSTAND THE HERITAGE OF THE JEWS SOLELY IN TERMS OF CULTURE IS TO MISUNDERSTAND IT.

As Strauss understood it, the principle of liberal democracy is the natural freedom and equality of all human beings, and the bond of liberal society is a universal morality that links human beings regardless of religion. Liberalism understands religion to be a primary source of divisiveness in society, but it also regards liberty of religious worship to be a fundamental expression of the autonomy of the individual. To safeguard religion and to safeguard society from conflicts over religion, liberalism pushes religion to the private sphere where it is protected by law. The liberal state also strictly prohibits public laws that discriminate on the basis of religion. What the liberal state cannot do without ceasing to be liberal is to use the law to root out and entirely eliminate discrimination, religious and otherwise, on the part of private individuals and groups.

According to Strauss, in Germany in the 1920s, liberalism secured a privacy that protected the autonomy of the individual. But that privacy provided at the same time shelter to the determination on the part of the non-Jewish German majority to view Jews as an inferior people and consign them to second-class status. In response, "a small minority of the German Jews, but a considerable minority of the German Jewish youth studying at the universities" were impelled to turn to Zionism. One of that considerable minority was Strauss.

Strauss declines to report the details of his personal involvement in the Zionist movement. Rather, he analyzes the instability in the strictly political Zionism to which he was drawn as a young man, and he shows how, when its premises are clarified and its aspirations are fully thought through, Zionism reveals the need for a return to Jewish faith. Political Zionism, the Zionism of Herzl, proposed a political solution to what it perceived to be a fundamentally political problem: The failure of the liberal state to secure equality for Jews. Political Zionism's solution was to create a modern nation state— liberal, democratic, and secular—for the Jewish people.

Strauss was unstinting in his admiration for political Zionism, both because of its devotion to restor-

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ing Jewish self-sufficiency and because of its decisive role in the creation of the state of Israel, which in Strauss's eyes "procured a blessing for all Jews everywhere regardless of whether they admit it or not." But political Zionism, in his judgment, was insufficient because it neglected the moral and spiritual life of the Jews it was seeking to save.

Strauss agreed with the cultural Zionists—those inspired by Ahad Ha'am—that the Jewish people could not be defined primarily in political terms on the basis of a common history of exclusion and degradation. Neither could they be rescued by a purely political solution. But when the cultural Zionists contended that the Jewish people were constituted by a common heritage or community of mind, Strauss considered their analysis true but incomplete—and misleading insofar as it implied that a recovery of Jewish culture, of Jewish art and dance and literature, could solve the Jewish problem.

Cultural Zionism suffered from a failure to reflect on the meaning of its central insight. To understand the heritage of the Jewish people solely in terms of culture is to misunderstand it, because "the foundation, the authoritative layer, of the Jewish heritage presents itself, not as a product of the human mind, but as a divine gift, as divine revelation." The clarification of its core insight transforms cultural Zionism into religious Zionism, a Zionism that takes its bearings from the Torah and Talmud.

But is a return to Jewish faith and devotion to fulfilling God's law even possible for modern, enlightened, and liberal people? Strauss reminds his readers that, according to Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig, the leading Jewish thinkers in Weimar Germany, a return to Jewish faith was both necessary and possible.

It was made necessary by the realization that liberalism alone could not, even at its best, satisfy man's religious hunger. And it was possible despite the presumption, routinely embraced by intellectuals now as well as then, that modern science and scholarship had once and for all refuted religious faith. Buber and Rosenzweig contended that the trouble with all alleged scientific refutations of faith was not that they inappropriately appealed to empirical evidence but that they were not empirical enough—blind to religious experience.

Leo Strauss

Kevin Chadwick

The atheist challenge was on its own terms based neither on a direct, unmediated perception of the essential character of the world nor on a comprehensive philosophical system that answered all questions and solved all mysteries. Rather, even more than the theism it rejected, atheism could not honestly deny that it too was an interpretation and hence uncertain and questionable.

The question becomes how to choose between an uncertain and questionable religious interpretation of the human condition and an uncertain and questionable atheistic interpretation. Strauss turned to Nietzsche, the greatest skeptic of his age, and came away with a surprising answer. Nietzsche, on Strauss's reading, "made clear that the denial of the biblical God demands the denial of biblical morality, however secularized, which, so far from being self-evident or rational, has no other support than the biblical God; mercy, compassion, egalitarianism, brotherly love, or altruism must give way to cruelty and its kin." But the logic that Nietzsche saw—that the renunciation of the biblical God demands a renunciation of biblical morality—is obligatory only if there is a demand placed upon us to confront our condition with intellectual probity. And that demand, Strauss points out, comes to us—as Nietzsche himself proclaims—only from the morality taught in the Bible. Strauss's startling suggestion, in other words, is that Nietzsche cannot escape the biblical God because he cannot escape biblical morality—even his critique of the Bible deriving from the Bible.

Strauss's study of Spinoza was the first step in his reconsideration of biblical religion, because Spinoza had taken religion most seriously and rejected it most emphatically. But after extended engagement with the arguments, Strauss concludes that Spinoza's critique of religion, was, even at its most forceful, inconclusive. It did not prove but rather presupposed the impossibility of miracles. And Spinoza's ethics did not demonstrate the truth of his new account of man and the moral life,

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but rather proceeded from hypotheses about human nature that were left unconfirmed by the system and so remained open to doubt.

In subsequent books, Strauss determined that the critique of religion developed by Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Locke was no more conclusive than that of Spinoza. In short, Strauss concluded, modern rationalism is incapable of deciding between belief and unbelief.

This is perhaps no disgrace, but modern rationalism's failure to acknowledge its incapacity is a grave weakness. Indeed, modern rationalism consistently deludes itself into believing that it has decided the issue once and for all against belief and in favor of unbelief. The critique of the delusions of modern rationalism did not lead Strauss, as it led so many intellectuals, to repudiate reason and embrace one of the many brands of modern irrationalism—from romanticism and historicism to existentialism and postmodernism. Instead, spurred forward by intellectual probity, the very same intellectual probity that in his view was Nietzsche's most precious legacy, Strauss undertook to search for a more reasonable form of rationalism, one that comprehended both the limits of reason and the claims of faith.

Strauss's lifelong search, passed on to his students, is responsible at least in part for the late-twentieth-century revival of interest in Plato and Aristotle as living sources of wisdom about moral and political life. So, too, it is responsible for the renewal of the quarrel between ancients and moderns, the clarification of the fruitful tension between Athens and Jerusalem, the illumination of modern liberalism's dependence on a morality that it has difficulty acknowledging in theory and sustaining in practice, and the demonstration of the powerful support that modern constitutional democracy derives from Aristotelian political science. Not least, Strauss's quest for a reasonable rationalism helped build the case for preferring the medieval religious rationalism of Maimonides over the modern atheistical rationalism of Spinoza—on the grounds of Maimonides's superior rationality.

Kenneth Hart Green concludes *Jewish Philosophy and the Crisis of Modernity* with what at first glance seems a curious selection: the brief memorial remarks Strauss made in 1962 in honor of Jason Aronson, at the time of his death at age thirty-two, a graduate student at the University of Chicago. Strauss pays eloquent tribute to Aronson's love of philosophy and his devotion to Judaism. In simple, striking words, Strauss identifies a soul in which two passions could grow together and both become strong without becoming one: "He did not permit his mind to stifle the voice of his heart nor his heart to give commands to his mind." Such, Strauss suggests, is the nature of a noble soul.

Reflection on his situation as a Jew in the modern world is what led Leo Strauss to become a philosopher who brought the claims of faith before the bar of reason. It seems that Strauss could not, in good conscience, be a believer in any ordinary sense of the term, but that did not prevent him from respecting Judaism's ways and loving its wisdom. Strauss was persuaded that the ultimate claims of faith could never fully satisfy the criteria of reason. But he was also convinced that reason could not satisfactorily refute faith's affirmations. His love of truth compelled Strauss to examine vigorously whether the universe was ruled by a just and merciful God. But his love of truth also obliged him to affirm that God, from the point of view of reason, was a magnificent idea that could not be ruled out and so must be examined sympathetically and critically. This is not what is ordinarily understood by piety. But piety of a kind it is nonetheless—the piety of a philosopher. ♦

MALICE IN WONDERLAND

Pat Schroeder's Years in the House

By Noemie Emery

This is Pat. Pat is good. See Pat run. Run, Pat, Run! Pat runs for Congress. Congress has men in it. Men are bad. They make Pat angry. They make Pat sad. Pat leaves Congress. Pat gets a pension. Pat writes a book.

Pat Schroeder
24 Years of Housework . . . and the Place Is Still a Mess
Andrews & McMeel, 288 pp., $24.95

Only the prose of a first-grade primer can capture the literary style, moral depth, and intellectual rigor of former Representative Patricia Schroeder's memoir, *24 of Housework . . . and the Place Is Still a Mess*—a book whose cutesy title is all too predictive of its contents. This is possibly the worst book ever written—a book so bad it demeans the idea of there being books in the world. It is also the best case one can make for the implied inferiority of women—for its style depends upon the tacit understanding that "girls" get to be cute, snide, and trivial in a way that no male in his senses ever would try.

And yet, in another way, Pat Schroeder's book—for all its air of

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malice in wonderland—is invaluable: a guide to the blindness, self-infatuation, and mindless fatuity that have made a dead letter of Schroeder's liberalism. *24 Years of Housework* helps explain why feminism, as Schroeder's kind defined it, has come apart at the seams.

Schroeder entered Congress in the 1972 election, in time to see Watergate, and departed twenty-four years later, when the long war with communism was finally won. What she chooses to record of these vital years is an astonishing roadmap for anyone wondering what history looks like through the eyes of an idiot. Watergate is dismissed in two pages, with little more than the news that Nixon could be, at times, a little peculiar. The Cold War gets almost no mention, and neither do the personalities she had the chance to encounter. Her powers of observation, depth of perception, and skills at character analysis are nicely summed up in such observations as "Gerald Ford was a decent fellow—he got up and toasted his own muffin—so how bad could he be?"

For anyone curious about the eight years of the Reagan administration, there is this insight: "Reagan was said to be a 'generalist,' a 'big picture' guy. And he could charm a snake. The deficit was soaring, and people were beginning to realize he had talked them into a hot fudge sundae diet that wasn't working. He was actually starting to get into trouble"—in his first months in office!—"when he was shot outside the Washington Hilton. Criticism stopped abruptly, and you know the rest of the story." He got himself shot! This explains everything: the end of the Cold War, the start of the ongoing wave of prosperity, the growing respect of historians and political rivals. Charm and a bullet can blind people to anything.

Much of this book is devoted to the sex wars—mainly the effort to extend abortion and destroy the armed forces. Schroeder seems stunned that some women actually disagree with her; so stunned in fact that she seems sunk in a time-warp, trapped forever in the 1970s, fighting for the ERA. The one female opponent she mentions by name is Phyllis Schlafly, the original Goldwater girl, whom she mentions largely in terms of her clothing: "Schlafly always looked like she came out of a Talbots catalogue from 1952. The anti-ERA forces must have had a dress code. They all wore nearly identical pastels and ruffles, conjuring up images of the perfect housewives Hollywood portrayed in Doris Day movies."

One wonders how Schroeder has missed the cable talk-shows all these years, the fashion spreads in the glossies: those young Republican women—all long legs and short skirts, right-wing and pro-life—who make the 1970s feminists look dowdy. Women of all kinds have been mobilized in reverse by Pat and her theories, but Pat sees only what suits her: Her opponents are all Stepford Wives, women who want only to be ironing, way back there in 1975.

The high point of her life was clearly the 1992 election, which brought us not only Bill and the ever-wonderful Hillary Clinton, but the still more wonderful "Year of the Woman" contingent. "This fresh new group had attitude and wanted action," she raves. "It was a heady time. Then came the angry white male backlash. . . . A lot of the new women in Congress lost." Of course, a lot of women also voted for the 1994 Republican Congress, and a lot of new women were elected to it, too. They also had attitude and wanted action, but the action they wanted was on tax cuts, and they weren't Pat's women, so they don't count.

Meanwhile Pat's pet, Bill—so "engaging," "alert," and "intelligent"—was hit with the old charge that he had exposed himself to a state employee while still governor and new charges that he had seduced an intern the approximate age of his daughter and assaulted in the Oval

"Mandatory reading for anyone who is open-minded and serious about the gun-control issue."
—Gary Kleck, professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Florida State University

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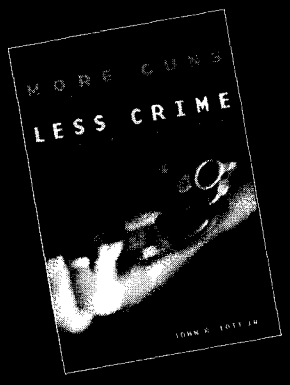

"Until John Lott came along, the standard research paper on firearms and violence consisted of a longitudinal or cross-sectional study on a small and artfully selected data set with few meaningful statistical controls. Lott's work, embracing all of the data that are relevant to his analysis, has created a new standard, which future scholarship in this area, in order to be credible, will have to live up to."—Dan Polsby, Kirkland & Ellis Professor of Law, Northwestern University

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Office a desperate woman who had come to him seeking a job. How does Pat react? With a mixture of misstatements, strained technicalities, and attacks on the victims: "Since [Paula Jones] first made her charges public, she has gone through a physical transformation that would have made Michael Jackson proud. But I look at things as a lawyer and lawmaker, trying to poke through the patina of approbation that Jones is trying to muster and get to the real issue. . . . *If someone invited me to his hotel* room, and we're two consenting adults, it's not sexual harassment if I'm dumb enough to go."

But what exactly did Paula Jones consent to? It was morning, in the working day, the hotel was the site of state business, and she was brought by state troopers to meet with the governor. This is not remotely "private life," yet even so, Pat is willing to sigh and forgive him, as she forgives her old friend Gary Hart. "I guess if the retro types get in trouble with women I'm not surprised, but my heart breaks when it's the good guys, like Hart, [Ted] Kennedy, and Robert Packwood. . . . I'm not sure why I have these different standards, but I keep hoping people will act as they vote." It never occurs to her that the "good guys" *are* acting as they vote—that they back easy abortion because they want their encounters with women to be cheap and quickly forgettable. It never occurs to her to ask why the "good guys" are in this kind of trouble so much more often than the "retro types" she despises.

Needless to say, her compassion does not extend to people on the other side: Conservatives are all haters; people who try to change welfare want to starve children; everyone who cringes at abortion wants to oppress women. But what is unique is her personal nastiness. Schroeder cannot contain her pleasure at the troubles of the freshman class of 1994. There were, she writes, "so many infidelities and broken marriages that we joked there must be a Republican group-rate for divorce lawyers, secretly calling it 'Fornigate'" (a term she resolutely doesn't use for her favorite president).

When she can't defend Clinton with any veracity, she attacks Ronald Reagan instead. "Clinton has done an admirable job in bringing up a daughter; he's still married, and working on it. Lay that against Ronald Reagan, whose family life was a disaster, his children writing books about his neglectful parenting, posing nude in magazines, dancing in their underwear on TV."

Never mind that this needless attack on a sick man and his family is years out of date and that Reagan's children have reconciled with their father. Never mind that Reagan never subjected his wife or his children to the ongoing mortification to which Bill Clinton is subjecting his. What we should mind is that this piece of wholly gratuitous knife-twisting viciousness is typical Schroeder, all too familiar to those who once saw her snideness on C-SPAN, usually followed by laments about the end of civility. Just as it is the feminist male politicians who have the most contempt for women, so it is the professional lovers of mankind who are most vicious to human beings one-by-one. She has charity only for those in her cadre, and malice aplenty for all those outside it. If the House did become a meaner, nastier place during Pat Schroeder's tenure, it was surely partly because she was there. ♦

THE THINKING MAN'S GAME

Bart Giamatti & George Will on Baseball

By Matthew Berke

Even by the late 1960s, baseball had lost its preeminence in American sport. Football and basketball, especially as televised events, seemed better designed for the hurried pace the culture was assuming, while a great range of other games and interests lured children from the national pastime. By the late 1990s, not even baseball's most ardent followers believe the sport will recover any time soon—particularly given Major League Baseball's current financial, labor, and public-relations problems.

A. Bartlett Giamatti
A Great and Glorious Game
Algonquin, 121 pp., $14.95

George F. Will
Bunts
Curt Flood, Camden Yards, Pete Rose and Other Reflections on Baseball
Scribner, 352 pp., $25

Matthew Berke is managing editor of First Things.

And yet, whatever the immediate future of baseball, the sport's long-term survival is secure. As with classic works of literature, which may or may not be the most popular reading during any particular era, baseball is sustained by a fiercely devoted core of fans. Nothing in the history of sports approaches the devotion of these fans, and, as a pair of new books show, baseball is the only major sport that can still be considered, in a certain strict and old-fashioned sense of the word, a *pastime*.

A Great and Glorious Game is a posthumous collection of essays by A. Bartlett Giamatti, the scholar of Renaissance literature and president

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of Yale University who became president of the National League and then, briefly, commissioner of Major League Baseball. His principal claim to fame as commissioner was the 1989 Pete Rose affair. Rose had been one of baseball's greatest players, but during the 1980s, while managing the Cincinnati Reds, he bet on games involving his own team—the greatest offense anyone in baseball can commit, aside from actually throwing a game. Giamatti banished Rose from baseball for life; a few days later, at age fifty-one, the commissioner was dead from a heart attack, his already poor health perhaps aggravated by the enormous stress of dealing with Rose.

As one might surmise from the title, *A Great and Glorious Game* belongs to the mythopoetic school of baseball writing, a genre known for its lapses into bathos and cliché, its cornball and kitsch about emerald-green fields and golden memories—about baseball as a metaphor for life, expressing all our primal and subliminal urges. The adjective "homeric" comes up a lot in this school of writing—more often, perhaps, than it does in writing about Homer. Such mythopoetry is not necessarily false, of course—but in large doses, even the dewiest-eyed baseball fans quickly grow tired of it.

In Bartlett Giamatti's hands, however, this mythopoetic genre seems to work, most of the time. Maybe that's because Giamatti avoids its worst excesses—or because somehow, through the purple prose, he gets things right, states clearly and convincingly what others say obscurely and preposterously. (Even the rough, unlettered Pete Rose recognized that Giamatti was no ordinary egghead: "He's an intellectual from Yale," Rose observed, "but very intelligent.") Thus, according to *A Great and Glorious Game*, the journey around the bases, "by theft and strength, guile and speed," acquires, so to speak, a homeric symbolism. Giamatti once dismissed basketball as all "thumpety, thumpety, thumpety, swish," and in basketball—as in football and hockey—the contestants charge up and down to place the ball or puck at a destination of no intrinsic value. But baseball

Kevin Chadwick

George Will

> is about going home, and how hard it is to get there and how driven is our need. It tells us how good home is. Its wisdom says you can go home again but that you cannot stay. The journey must always start once more, the bat an oar over the shoulder, until there is an end to all journeying. *Nostos*; the going home; the game of nostalgia, so apt an image for our hunger that it hurts.

The end of all human striving, according to Samuel Johnson (serious baseball analysis *requires* literary allusions), is "to be happy at home." It's hardly surprising, then, that the sport about going home should attract and inspire so many writers and thinkers, sustain endless debates and conversations about the past, and prompt the compulsive hoarding of "sacred" memorabilia.

But perhaps this is to intellectualize and psychologize too much. On somewhat firmer empirical ground is Giamatti's description of baseball's addictive, mesmerizing effect over the course of a long spring and summer: "You count on it, rely on it to buffer the passage of time, to keep the memory of sunshine and high skies alive." One ends up "investing more and more in baseball, making the game do more of the work that keeps time fat and slow and lazy . . . counting on the game's deep patterns, three strikes, three outs, three times three innings, and its deepest impulse, to go out and back, to leave and to return home, to set the order of the day."

Recalling a game in which his beloved Boston Red Sox were eliminated from the playoffs by their old nemesis, the New York Yankees, Giamatti insists that, win or lose, the end of a baseball season "breaks my heart because it was meant to, because it was meant to foster in me again the illusion that there was something abiding, some pattern and some impulse that could come together to make a reality that would resist the corrosion; and because, after it had fostered again that most hungered for illusion, the game was meant to stop, and betray precisely what it promised." In a world where "nothing lasts," he concludes, "I need to think something lasts forever, and it might as well be that state of being that is a game; and it might as well be that, in a green field, in the sun."

The political commentator George F. Will, when not diverted by national and international affairs, tends to write about baseball in a different style. Will's 1990 bestseller, *Men at Work: The Craft of Baseball*, was a nuts-and-bolts account of the game's techniques and tactics. Will concentrated on how players and managers dedicate themselves to excellence at their craft. It was an ingenious demonstration of the subtle interplay

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among intelligence, physical ability, and trained reflex, and it showed how little things done well or poorly have an enormous cumulative effect over the course of a 162-game season.

Will's latest baseball book, *Bunts*, is a splendid collection of essays written over the last two decades. It rehearses many of his earlier themes, but it takes a broader, lighter view. Like Giamatti, Will insists that one of the great pleasures of baseball is remembering, savoring, and discussing the past. And Will is a fount of memories about baseball's past. He repeatedly returns, for instance, to his lifelong disappointment with the Chicago Cubs, a team whose "mediocrity under pressure" has for Will come to symbolize Man's Fate. The Cubs have not won a pennant since 1945 (when, as the author points out, most able-bodied males were in the Army) or a World Series since 1908; thus, in Will's mock optimism, the Cubs are in the ninetieth year of a rebuilding program. Will recalls that when he was a boy in the 1950s, his birthday celebration always included watching a doubleheader at the Cubs' Wrigley Field—so he could enjoy "two defeats for the price of one."

Though Will appreciates both earnestness and humor, he roundly disparages some varieties of baseball romanticism—particularly "a certain kind of person" who tries to freight the game with heavy poetic and philosophical meaning. "I would call that person an intellectual," Will says, "but let there be no name-calling." (The object of his attack is not Bartlett Giamatti but Professor Donald Kagan—another intellectual from Yale, but very intelligent—who had criticized *Men at Work* for its emphasis on craft and calculation over drama and glory.)

But though he may be shy about saying how it all fits together, Will clearly does think baseball is more than the sum of its parts. It could hardly be otherwise: Almost any sport, taken seriously, provides a vehicle for the cultivation and display of virtue. Will might not admit that he agrees with Giamatti that the trip around the bases is an allegory for life, but he does acknowledge that "Baseball, properly practiced and appreciated, is a form and object of love, and thus touches, at least tangentially, all of life's great themes." And he seconds journalist Thomas Boswell's claim that the game's peculiar "blend of intensity and underlying serenity" is something that "in daily life, we might call mental health." Will even thinks that baseball—with its long season of "peaks and valleys" in which even the best teams lose a third of their games—is "a study in culmination" that "illustrates regeneration, resurrection, and life's second chances."

All of which helps explain why, as Will puts it, "the involvement of baseball fans with their sport is different, in kind and intensity, from the involvement of people with professional football and basketball." It is in the everydayness of baseball—this season, last season, and all the seasons past—that George Will the sober realist meets Bartlett Giamatti the mythopoetic hymnist. Where Giamatti speaks of "something abiding, some pattern and some impulse" to "resist the corrosion," Will speaks simply of "baseball as oxygen"—for the fans, "part of the rhythm of their lives and the fabric of the nation's history." It is the only sport that truly constitutes a pastime—our national pastime, whether we know it or not. ♦

A Bull's Worth

The Warren Beatty Rap

By John Podhoretz

Warren Beatty's world extends from the hotel in Beverly Hills where he lived for thirty years all the way to the house in Beverly Hills where he now resides. The man who won an Oscar for directing *Reds*, the endless 1981 movie glorifying the Russian Revolution that would murder more than sixty million people in seventy years, has now brought forth a labor of love called *Bulworth*.

In *Bulworth*, which he co-wrote and directed, Beatty plays a U.S. senator who suddenly becomes a Marxist while running for reelection—and receives 71 percent of the vote before being assassinated by an insurance company. It would be tempting to describe *Bulworth* as the single most left-wing portrait of the United States ever attempted on film, but *Bulworth* is not actually set in the United States. It is set in Beattyworld, a fantasy land in which the suffering masses are just waiting for a politician who will wander around yelling "Socialism!" and "Ebonics? Great!"

Bulworth is a negligible piece of work with a few laughs, a fifteen-minute skit padded to feature length. Only Beatty's performance makes the movie watchable. A highly underrated actor, Beatty has the rare ability to convince an audience that what his character does and says is spontaneous and fresh. There is something ineffably amusing about watching this aging Lothario play a Clinton-like senator from California who begins by blathering about "the doorstep of a new millennium" and ends as a hip-hop homie in baggy shorts delivering his ideological mes-

A contributing editor to The Weekly Standard, *John Podhoretz edits the editorial pages of the* New York Post.

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sage entirely in rap.

Why rap? Well, in *Bulworth*, Beatty has spent $34 million bringing the domestic platform of the *Nation* magazine to the American moviegoer, and he knows his audience would fall asleep if subjected to a succession of policy proposals on insurance reform, Medicare, and the revitalization of urban manufacturing. Even Michael Dukakis doesn't go to the movies to suffer in that way.

So Beatty came up with the idea of issuing his Marxist apologetics in rhyme: *Whether you call it single-payer or the Canadian way / Socialized medicine gonna save the day*. I'll spare you his doggerel about campaign-finance reform and free television time for political candidates, but the level of Beatty's critique of current conditions can be judged from: *The real obscenity black folks live with every day / Is tryin' to believe a f—in' word Democrats and Republicans say*.

You might think that only Hollywood people would buy into this nonsense—the kind of people who sing the virtues of wholesale redistribution of income while negotiating contracts in which the candy dishes in their trailer must contain only blue and red M&Ms. But it turns out that the nation's movie critics, whose wardrobes cost less than Beatty's socks, are also residents of Beattyworld.

What do the critics have to say about a movie in which the title character delivers a eulogy to the humanitarianism of Huey Newton, among whose humanitarian acts was the murder of Oakland police officer John Frey in 1967? It is not enough to read their celebratory words; you must also consider the subtexts:

"A subversive, hilarious and important new Molotov cocktail!" raves Jonathan Alter in *Newsweek*. (Subtext: Warren, please invite me over to dinner!)

"Thrillingly dangerous. . . . Beatty's rebellion is joyously eccentric and hedonistic!" shrieks David Denby in *New York*. (Subtext: When I was a Vietnam-era draft-dodger, I wrote for an alternative paper in Boston!)

"Furiously original!" hollers Leah Rozen in *People*. (Subtext: I'm trying to bring culture to the illiterate masses who like only movies about comets!)

This supposedly subversive, dangerous, original movie has these plot points:

• A guy takes out an insurance policy and then hires a hit man to kill him; the hit man turns out to be a woman, and the two fall in love. "Warren Beatty is playing with fire here"—Peter Travers, *Rolling Stone*.

• A senator is called upon by an insurance-company lobbyist who is fat, speaks with a southern accent, and says racist things about black people. "It may be the most keenly astute and honest film about politics ever"—Sam Rubin, KTLA.

• An uptight, rich white man finds himself spending time with black people, who are, without exception, wiser and more sexually confident than any Caucasians he has ever known. "A truth-teller's movie"—Peter A. Kaplan, *New York Observer*.

• Four black kids under the age of ten encounter an L.A. cop who calls them "coons" before rubbing an ice-cream cone in the face of a six-year-old. "It has a startling optimism about race in America"—Kaplan again.

• So stirred is a drug dealer by Bulworth's words that he reforms and decides he is going to clean up the neighborhood, just like the sainted Huey. "Beatty would never have thrown a firecracker like *Bulworth* if he didn't want to spark dialogue on race and class"—Lynn Hirschberg, *New York Times Magazine*.

Bulworth considers itself a political satire. Perhaps in Beattyworld it is. But here on planet Earth, it's just agitprop for a politics whose few remaining adherents know nothing of America except Beverly Hills—or the movies made by those from Beverly Hills. ♦

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Parody

"Critics find it revealing that Hickman Ewing's 1980 law review article, 'Combating Official Corruption by All Available Means,' began with an Old Testament quotation: 'And his sons walked not in his ways but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes and perverted judgment.'"

—New York Times

STARR DEPUTY MAY REALLY BELIEVE IN EXISTENCE OF GOD

HAS QUOTED FROM THE BIBLE

New Fears Arise Over the Independent Counsel's Understanding of the Constitution

By Francis X. Clines

WASHINGTON, May 17 — There is growing evidence today that independent counsel Kenneth Starr's top deputy Hickman Ewing believes in God, and not just in the normal church-on-Easter way. Mr. Ewing is actually willing to carry his religious beliefs out into the world. Eighteen-year-old law-review documents dug up by Clinton administration private investigators and dumped into the pages of the *New York Times* by me reveal that Mr. Ewing has used biblical scripture to support his view, common among religious fanatics, that taking bribes is wrong.

Sources say that Mr. Ewing believes in Jesus H. Christ, the controversial Jewish carpenter who, according to legend, lived in Palestine some 2,000 years ago and whose teachings later led to a Religious Right takeover of the Roman Empire, leading to its downfall.

Though modern science has disproved the claims made on Mr. Christ's behalf—his purported ability to walk on water and raise the dead, for example—he remains an object of fervent worship among many people in the poorer and less well-educated parts of the United States. These fundamentalists, as they are known, have a tendency to burn books, repress their natural urges, and hate Bill Clinton. Many believe that tornadoes can be averted through prayer.

If Mr. Ewing did apply his moral beliefs outside church property, then he is guilty of violating the "separation of church and state" clause of the U.S. Constitution, scholars agree, a crime punishable by 16 to 22 negative columns by Anthony Lewis with no possibility of parole.

Fundamentalists believe that not only bribery is wrong, but also murder, lying, adultery, stealing, and corruption—all offenses that are punishable by law in theocratic nations such as Iran.

"While of course I believe that religion is good in principle," says Episcopal bishop John Spong, "rigorous social science studies have shown beyond question that too much belief can lead to Republican voting patterns."

Many observers have long suspected that Mr. Ewing is religious, having noted his judgmentalism when it comes to criminal behavior. "It's weird the way he gets so hyped up about right and wrong," respected legal commentator James Carville observes. Neither Mr. Ewing nor the Rev. Jimmy Swaggert, another noted follower of Mr. Christ, could be reached for comment.

Continued on Page B11, Column 2

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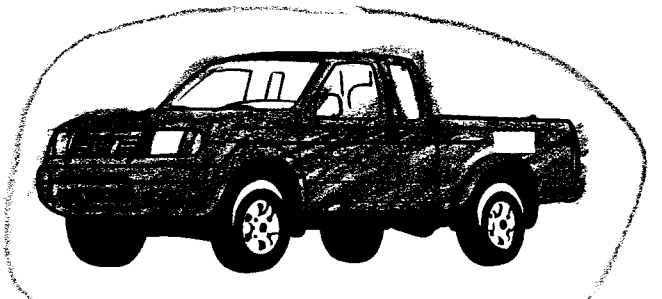

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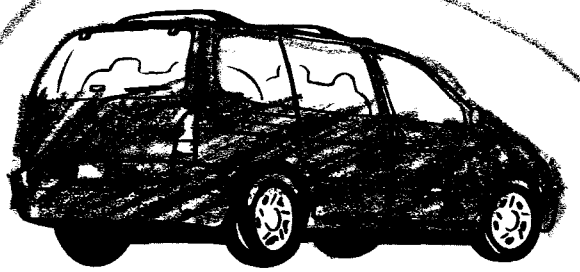

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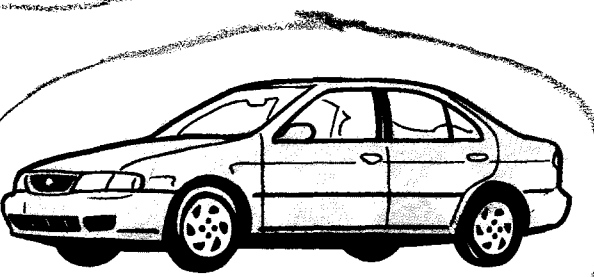

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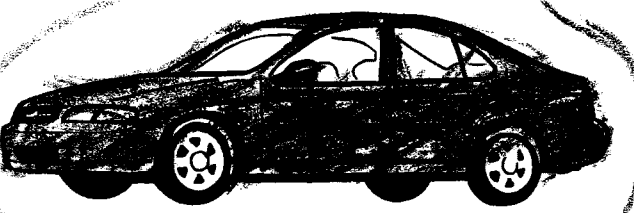

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